







## **THE HUNDRED BEST TRICKS**



*By the same Author*

A HUNDRED MYSTERIES FOR ARM-CHAIR DETECTIVES

THE SECRETS OF HOUDINI (*7th Edition*)

WHEN FLEET STREET CALLS

# THE HUNDRED BEST TRICKS

by

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TO MY WIFE,  
DOROTHY



## AUTHOR'S NOTE

IN this book there are actually many more than a hundred tricks and all of them could be performed by the average person. I have included no trick which would involve the use of expensive apparatus.

Besides devoting a whole chapter to the best card tricks, I have included a number of simpler tricks with cards in other parts of the book.

I have deliberately avoided giving large numbers of intricate diagrams, as in most cases these merely confuse the reader.

The Press Club,  
E.C.4.



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**THE PRINCE OF WALES AS A  
CONJURER**



# THE HUNDRED BEST TRICKS

## THE PRINCE OF WALES AS A CONJURER

A good trick is loved by everyone, and there are few forms of entertainment in which reasonable efficiency can be achieved with so little trouble. A man who knows ten good tricks is always sure of an attentive audience.

Schoolboys and princes alike share in this universal love of magic.

Few members of the public are aware that the Prince of Wales, for example, is an expert amateur conjurer. Indeed, some years ago he went to the trouble of taking a series of lessons in conjuring from one of the best known illusionists in England. In this way he acquired an extensive repertoire of tricks and learned to perform them brilliantly. He was a painstaking pupil and rehearsed scores of times each trick shown to him. His quick mind and deft hands enabled him to gain proficiency as a conjurer at a speed which astonished



his tutor, the veteran illusionist. The first conjuring trick which the Prince learned was to turn a silk handkerchief into a Union Jack. Then he proceeded to master more difficult tricks, showing a particular fondness for card tricks in which some dexterity was required. Also he built up a useful little library of books on magic.

Soon the Prince of Wales was able to perform as many as fifty good tricks with considerable expertness, and he is always eager to learn a new conjuring trick.

With his conjuring, the Prince often amuses and mystifies his father, King George, who loves seeing a good trick.

Prince George also performs a number of tricks, but he is not so accomplished as his brother.

Not long ago, the Prince of Wales was a guest at a private party in Mayfair. During the evening a certain young peer who is greatly interested in conjuring performed a few tricks to entertain the gathering. Later the Prince of Wales was persuaded also to contribute some magic to the evening's entertainment. He performed trick after trick with the smooth efficiency of a professional conjurer, much to the astonishment of the guests, most of whom had never heard of the Prince's accomplishment in this direction. The young peer afterwards said that until he had seen the Prince

perform he had always fancied himself as a conjurer !

The Prince shows deep interest in professional magicians when he sees them perform on the stage.

I am told that some time ago he was, like the rest of the audience, much amused at an incident which occurred when a well-known magician was appearing at a music-hall.

At the beginning of the programme the conjurer asked for the assistance on the stage of three boys from the audience. Three kiddies, eager to take part, scrambled on to the stage. At the conjurer's request they sat down on chairs provided.

"Now," said the magician, in a joking tone, pointing to the boy in the centre, who happened to be younger than the other two, "I am going to make this boy disappear."

Instantly the small boy burst into tears and called out between his sobs : "I don't want to disappear. I want to go back to my mother."

The audience, including the Prince, roared with laughter at the comically unexpected turn in the proceedings.

Still crying at the fearful thought that he might be whisked away, the boy was led back to his mother, while another lad, who declared that he would like to disappear, took his place on the stage.



## **THOUGHT-READING TRICKS**



## THOUGHT-READING TRICKS

**Mind-Reading Magic.**—There are known to magicians several excellent codes for signalling numbers, names of cards or information, and here, for example, is a code which will repay a hundredfold the slight trouble required to master it.

Head forward, eyes to the left—One ; head forward, eyes to the right—Two ; head forward, eyes upward—Three ; head forward, eyes downcast—Four ; head upward, eyes upward—Five ; head down, eyes downcast—Six ; head to the left, eyes straight ahead—Seven ; head down to the left, eyes downcast—Eight ; head to the right, eyes straight ahead—Nine ; head down to the right, eyes downcast—Nought.

The neutral position is head forward and eyes straight ahead.

When you are signalling figures by this method, assume a somewhat tense expression as though you were strongly concentrating to convey by "thought waves" the required number to your partner, with whom, of course, you must carefully practise the code. This appearance of being absorbed will take away the attention of your audience from the position of your

head and eyes, though in actual practice no-one ever suspects how the signalling is done.

You will at once realize the possibilities of this code. By means of it, with certain additions, you can, for instance, signal in silence the name of any card in the pack.

A card selected in your absence from a room can be named by you instantly on your return, although at no stage of the trick do you even see the pack.

You already know that your partner, who, of course, has seen the card, can signal the number of the suit to you. It is quite easy for him to go further and signal the name of the suit. Your partner should be smoking, and if, when you re-enter the room, he is holding his cigarette in his left hand, that means hearts; in his right hand, diamonds; in the left side of the mouth, clubs; and the right side of the mouth, spades. The Ace, King, Queen and Jack may be indicated by the position of the feet. Thus, the left foot forward means Ace; right foot forward, King; both feet together, Queen; toe of right foot turned away distinctly to the right, Jack.

All this is not nearly so complex as it may seem at first glance. You will be surprised at the degree of proficiency you can achieve after twenty minutes' practice.

Yet an even more astonishing feat of thought-reading

than this can be achieved with this eye code. It is known as the "Book Test" and will baffle the shrewdest of your friends.

A word is selected by your friends from any book after you have left the room, and when you return you take up the book, ask everyone to concentrate upon the word, turn over the pages and then find the word. The secret is that when the word was selected your confederate quietly noted the number of the page on which it appeared and also its position on the page.

Supposing the word "moonlight" had been chosen, your partner would have noted that it appeared on page 27 in the fourth line from the top and was the second word in the line. By means of the eye code he signals these numbers, coming to the "neutral position" after each.

All you have to do is to turn over the pages and find the word, but do not forget the necessary request that the audience should concentrate. Always give people you want to deceive something to occupy their minds so that they cannot concentrate on you.

**Seeing Through the Envelopes.**—Here is a method of finding out what someone has written on a card placed in a sealed envelope.



Hand out to your friends pencils, envelopes and a number of small plain cards of the size of visiting cards. Ask them to write or draw something on the cards, seal them in envelopes and return them to you.

Place the envelopes on a small table in front of you and touch each of them with your fingers, saying you want to establish "thought-contact" with the writer of that particular card. Although it is impossible for you to open the envelopes you are able to read what has been written or drawn on each card.

The explanation is that when you touch the envelopes under the pretence of establishing "thought-contact" you are really dabbing them with a tiny sponge soaked in pure alcohol, which has the effect of making the envelopes temporarily transparent.

How you finish this trick is entirely a matter for yourself. You can tear or burn all the envelopes when you have read their contents, or if you are near a stove or fire you can give the envelopes a chance thoroughly to dry while you are performing another trick. This will later allow you to let the envelopes be re-inspected, but this is by no means a necessary part of the trick.

**Reading the News.**—One of the most baffling tricks known to the art of magic involves the use of a news-

paper, or, rather, several newspapers. It is a "thought-reading" trick, and although I have performed it on many occasions before audiences of exceptional shrewdness, I have never known it to be detected.

In the drawing-room of a friend's house during a party I produce five different genuine newspapers bearing the same date. I suggest that in my absence from the room the guests should select a news paragraph or any other item from whichever newspaper they care to choose.

To remove any suspicion of confederacy from their minds, I ask that one person should select a newspaper, another a particular page, a third a column in the newspaper, and a fourth an actual item. This makes it impossible for a choice to be forced on the party in my absence. I request further that everyone in the room should see the paragraph selected so as to be able to "concentrate their thoughts" upon it when I return.

Another instruction I give them is that when the paragraph has been decided upon, the newspaper should be folded up again, placed anywhere among the other four, and then someone should open the door and shout "Ready", or, better still, strike once on a gong. This latter precaution is to make it impossible for anyone to communicate the choice by coming out to meet me.

When so summoned I return to the room, and though my eyes are closed, I begin immediately to describe in detail the item chosen, even giving names and addresses. I repeat this several times, and invariably everyone is baffled.

You can do it in your own home if you are prepared to take a little trouble and to spend a few shillings. I have seen scientists, famous K.C.s, and even brother magicians completely puzzled by this trick. The secret is that, in each case, the choice made by the guests was signalled to me in a simple yet effective manner before I returned to the drawing-room.

When I left the room I went to another room in the corridor to wait until someone shouted for me to return. In the meantime, I was busy receiving signals from the drawing-room, under the carpet of which a simple electric flex ran to the other room.

Under the carpet in the drawing-room was a tiny switch which any amateur electrician could easily make in a few minutes, and this my confederate operated with his foot. At the other end of the electric wire in the room where I sat, was a small electric bulb. I had concealed in this room where I was waiting a duplicate set of the newspapers.

The newspapers in the drawing-room and those in the other room were secretly numbered, and if, for

example, one of the guests chose the *Daily Telegraph*, my confederate, knowing that this was No. 2, pressed twice with his foot on the switch under the carpet, where he was standing in readiness. I, therefore, saw two flashes on my lamp, and reached out for the *Daily Telegraph*. Then next I saw five flashes. That meant that page five had been selected. If the news item was the third from the top of the chosen column, then, seeing three flashes, I looked at the selected paragraph and quickly memorized its contents roughly, paying special attention to names and addresses.

A man with a reasonably good memory can absorb and retain a good deal in less than a minute. Coming back to the room with my eyes closed, I make a good pretence of "reading the thoughts" of the guests, whom I ask strongly to concentrate upon the contents of the selected paragraph.

Just one word of warning concerning this excellent trick. Practise it with your confederate beforehand and arrange that if a page with a high number, like sixteen, is chosen, he will flash once and then, after a tiny pause, six more times. This avoids the clumsiness of having to flash sixteen times.



**A Remarkable Card Trick.**—Conjuring is not based on confederacy. In fact, the best conjurers are those who perform a series of tricks without a confederate. Yet there are several really excellent tricks in which the help of an intelligent and secret assistant can be most mystifying. The complete conjurer must know a number of good tricks in which a confederate takes part. I intend to teach you a few such tricks in this series.

I know scores of good card tricks, but there is one which has baffled the members of The London Press Club, to which I belong, more than anything I have ever performed before them.

What happens is this: I tell the audience in the lounge of the club that I will do a card trick, *without seeing the pack of cards to be used in the trick*. I say that I will leave the lounge and that in my absence the steward will produce a pack of cards. I request that some member should select a card and that the cards should then be hidden away.

When I return to the lounge I at once describe the chosen card—and I am right every time. This seems to amaze the club members. The quickness and accuracy with which I name the card chosen in my absence is really mystifying to them. “He has not even seen the cards,” they say.

The secret is that my confederate, another member of the club, signals to me on my return the name of the card which has been selected. The method of signalling is one which the average person would never suspect. Like most of the other members of the club, my confederate is smoking. If when I return to the lounge his cigarette is being held in his left hand, that means that the suit chosen is hearts, if in his right, diamonds. If the cigarette is in the left side of his mouth, it means spades and if in the right side, clubs. So I know the suit at once, and no-one will suspect such a code.

And then I glance secretly at the used match-stick, which lies on the table close beside him. That is arranged beforehand on the basis of an imaginary clock-face, up to ten, the head of the match pointing to the imaginary figure. Thus I can see at a glance whether the match-head is pointing to "three" or "six".

If my confederate's heels are together that means that the ace of the particular suit has been chosen. If they are apart, it must be the king. If he has his left foot forward that is the queen, but if I see his right foot is forward the jack has been chosen.

Just make a little practice of this code and you will

soon realize how remarkably effective and mysterious it can be. I have performed the trick hundreds of times with distinct success.



**Another Code.**—Here is the basis of another code for signalling the names of cards, and so on.

In your absence from the room a card is selected by the audience and when you return you tell the suit, and if you are smart the actual card as well, after someone has challenged you to tell it.

The person who asks you to tell the card is your confederate.

If he says, "Can you tell us which card we have chosen?" you will know that it is clubs because the first word in his question begins with the letter "C". If he says, "Do you know what card?" then it is diamonds. "Have you discovered which card?" would be hearts. "Someone has chosen a card" would be spades.

The other details of the card can be signalled in a number of neat ways which you can arrange to suit yourself. If your confederate has one hand in his pocket and you can see the five fingers of the other hand it would be the five of some suit. And so on.



**The Domino Trick.**—The performer invites someone to play a game of dominoes by himself. He is to begin with the double-six and play the pieces in the usual way. While the game is going on the magician turns his back on the player. When all the dominoes have been used, he asks his assistant to think intently of the numbers at the two ends of the line of dominoes, and at once announces the numbers which are being thought about.

Here is a trick that cannot go wrong. All that is necessary is to put one of the dominoes in the pocket before the trick begins ; the numbers on that domino will be those on the ends of the row when the player has finished.



**The Tell-Tale Touch.**—A new pack of cards is handed to the audience. The conjurer asks for the cards to be shuffled, and thirteen dealt in a heap and handed to him. Holding the thirteen cards in a “fan”, with the backs towards himself, he asks a member of the audience to touch any card he pleases and to think of it. Then the magician reads the thoughts of the other.

Everyone will jump to the conclusion that marked cards are being used, but the explanation is much simpler than that. If the reader will hold thirteen cards



in the form of a fan in his hand he will see that when a card has been touched, the faces of the cards being held up to the assistant, it is easy to turn up the lower left hand corner of that card with his left thumb, and that corner, being the index corner, will give him the name of the card that has been touched. It is advisable to use thin cards.

**A Six-Fold Test.**—A member of the audience is handed a new pack of cards. The person doing the trick asks that they may be taken out of the wrapper and handed back to him. He then asks someone to lift off a few cards and put them underneath the others ; that is to say, the pack has been cut. Impressing on his assistant that he cut the pack where he pleased, the performer asks him to take off the next six cards and hand them round to members of the audience.

While this is being done he turns his back on the audience so that he will not be able to get a glimpse of any of the cards. When the six cards have been distributed he turns round, asks the holders to think of them, and immediately tells each person what card he is holding.

The secret is based on the fact that packs of the same brand are put up in the same order. The thought-reader

copies the order (in shortened form, of course) on a visiting card and puts it in his waistcoat pocket.

After the pack has been cut he gets a glimpse of the bottom card and remembers it. When he turns his back on the audience all he has to do is to take the card from his pocket and find out what six cards come after the one at the bottom of the pack. He should have no difficulty in remembering those six cards for a few moments.

**The Zero Hour.**—The illusionist hands his watch to a member of the audience and asks him to think of the exact hour at which he is going to get up in the morning. He takes back his watch—his reason for handing it out was only to show that it had the usual face—and says that he is going to tap on the watch a few times. “Imagine,” he says to his assistant, “that I have already tapped out the hour of which you are thinking, and when I tap once add one to that hour. Keep on adding one for every tap till the sum comes to twenty and then tell me to stop.” The instructions are carried out, and when the performer is told to stop he shows that he has stopped tapping on the hour of which the assistant chose to think.

This is how it is done. You tap seven times at any

figures on the watch. The eighth tap must be on twelve, and then go round the watch backwards. When told to stop you will be on the right number. For example, suppose the assistant decides to think of nine. The eighth tap must be on the twelve, and when that tap is given the assistant is thinking of seventeen. Three more taps backwards will lead to the figure nine at which should come the order to stop. It will be seen that if the eighth tap is on twelve, and the performer taps at each figure going backwards round the clock the trick cannot go wrong.



**All Done by the "Joker".**—Here is a little thought-reading trick which, the conjurer says, is really done by the aid of the "joker". He runs through the pack, removes the "joker", and puts it down on the table. Then he divides the pack into three equal piles and asks someone to look at the top card of each pile and to remember it. (If the person is not accustomed to card playing it is as well to have the names of the three cards written down.) Afterwards he asks his assistant to think intently of the three cards and to pick up the joker by one end. He himself holds the other end of the card. In due course he tells his assistant the three cards that are being thought of.

The main part of the trick is done when the performer is picking out the joker ; while he is doing this he is also noting and remembering the three top cards.

In dividing the pack into three equal parts he lays stress on the importance of having the three packets exactly equal, and he lays the joker on the top of them for a moment. Then he says quite casually : "I think we want two or three cards on this heap, and perhaps one or two on this—to make them all level." Apparently he moves a few cards from the heap which was originally the top of the pack, but he really moves only two cards and puts them on to the next packet ; he then says he thinks that that packet is a shade too high for the trick and he slides one card on to the next packet. Now, the three cards which were originally at the top of the pack are on the tops of the three piles (one on each) and as he noted them when he was searching for the joker and afterwards remembered them the rest is easy.

**Just One Card.**—For this experiment, ask someone to shuffle a pack of cards and cut. Another person is asked to think of any card in the first twelve and to remember its place in the pack. "For instance," says the conjurer, "if you decide to think of the top card

that will be number one ; if you think of the sixth card from the top that will be number six, and so on. I will turn my back on you while you make your selection." On turning round he asks the person who is thinking of the card to concentrate on it. He then says that he will try to think of that number too, and takes out a card (without showing it) and puts it in his right-hand coat pocket. "Now," he says, "perhaps you will kindly say what was the number of your card counting from the top." (We will suppose that the number was five.) "That was the number I thought of," says the performer, "and therefore I really did take out the actual card of which you were thinking. Let me show you." He deals down to the fifth card (with the cards face downwards) and says : "If I made a mistake that is your card. Will you turn it over." The person doing so admits that it is not the card of which he decided to think. "No," says the conjurer, "I told you that I put your card in my pocket, and I did. Here it is." He takes it out.

When the illusionist has the pack in his hands and is pretending to find the card that is being thought of he really slides the bottom card of the pack to the top. Therefore, if the card that is being thought of was originally the fifth it is now the sixth. He then appears to take a card from a position near the top of the pack,

but he really takes any card below the top twelve and, without showing it to the audience, openly puts it into his pocket. Directly the card is in the pocket it is quickly folded in two. When he is dealing the cards in order to show his assistant that he has really removed the card that is being thought of he deals down to the fifth (in this case). Unknown to the audience the next card is really the chosen card. While the assistant is turning over the card on the table the performer, standing with his right hand at his side, slides the top card (which is the chosen card) into his pocket. Then, at the conclusion of the trick, he merely has to put his hand into his pocket and take out the card. The reader will now see why the card which is openly put in the pocket is folded; obviously so that the right card shall be drawn from the pocket.

**The Telegraphic Coin.**—Here the illusionist asks someone to come to his table and hands out a florin and a half-crown. "Now," he says, "please take one of those coins in your right hand and the other in your left. When my back is turned I want you to think intently of one of those coins and I'm going to try to read your thoughts." Turning round, he pretends to

be in difficulty ; he says that the assistant is not thinking hard enough. "Please hold the hand containing the coin of which you are thinking to your forehead. Keep it there for a moment—I am reading your thoughts. Thanks. Now put your hand down again." Turning round again he at once announces which coin has been thought of.

This is easy. The hand that was raised to the assistant's forehead will be slightly paler than the other. If the reader will hold his hand to his head for a moment and then compare the colour with that of the other hand he will see at once how simple the feat is.

**Mass Thinking.**—A dozen pennies are handed out and someone is asked to note that there are not two pennies of the same date. The performer asks that the dates may be called out to him and as each date is named he writes it down on a little slip of paper and puts it in a tumbler. Someone is asked to take out one of the slips, open it, and hand it round so that everyone in the room may see it. While this is being done, the conjurer goes behind his screen, so that he cannot possibly get a glimpse of the date on the slip. He comes back and asks everyone to think hard of the date which

has been chosen. He then picks up the pennies, one at a time, and holds them to his forehead until he comes to one which seems to cause him to hesitate for a moment. He then asks the audience to tell him the date of which they are thinking and he at once hands out the penny he is holding ; he has read their thoughts correctly. If anyone should ask to see the tumbler containing the rest of the slips the performer at once hands it out and anyone can examine the eleven slips left in it.

When he was writing down the dates of the coins he really wrote only one date on each of the twelve slips ; therefore it did not matter which slip was taken. In picking up the pennies and holding them to his head he caught a glimpse of the penny bearing the date he had written down. Behind his screen he had another tumbler containing eleven slips with a different date on each, and, of course, the date which the audience had "chosen" was not on any of these slips. In going behind his screen for a moment he changed one tumbler for the other.

**A Cool Encore Trick.**—The magician says that he would like to encore that trick himself, and he hands someone four of the pennies and asks that one may



be chosen. The chosen penny is put on one side. He holds the other pennies in his hands and talks for a few moments about the "power of thought". He then asks the person who chose the penny to drop it among the others he is holding. He turns his head away while this is being done. Then, holding the pennies against his forehead, he stops at the one which was chosen.

When the selected penny was put on one side it was placed for a moment on the mantelpiece, and therefore when put among the others was a shade colder to the touch, so that there was no difficulty in discovering it.

**With Four Handkerchiefs.**—Having shown four small silk handkerchiefs of different colours and four small envelopes, all of which may be examined, the person doing the trick asks that the handkerchiefs may be placed in the envelopes. He turns away when this is being done and, still in that position, asks that the envelopes may be placed in his hands. He then turns round again, keeping the envelopes behind him. He brings an envelope into view of the audience, holds it to his forehead without glancing at it, and announces the colour of the handkerchief which it contains. He then puts that envelope on one side and proceeds to "read" the colours of the handkerchiefs in the other

envelopes. Afterwards, anyone may open the envelopes and show that the performer's thought-reading has been successful.

Directly the conjurer has the envelopes behind his back he slips them into the left hip pocket of his trousers and takes from the other hip pocket four other envelopes arranged in an order known to him.

**So Simple !**—In this case the conjurer's confederate goes out of the room while various articles are collected from the audience on a tray. Before the experiment begins someone is asked to go out to the assistant, blindfold her, and lead her back to the room. She stands with her back to the principal. When he takes an article from the tray and holds it to his forehead he beckons to someone in the audience to ask the assistant to describe it. She does so and continues to describe the rest of the things.

This is easy, because the magician and his assistant have arranged between themselves what articles are to be borrowed and in what order they are to be handled. However, to make the trick a little more convincing one or two extra touches can be added. The principal can hold up his empty hand (after, say, a pocket-book) and the assistant after a moment or two of hesitation,

says: "Don't be silly; you're not holding anything." Or, the performer and the assistant can decide that after he has held up a watch he will immediately pause to light a cigarette if it is a wrist-watch, and the lady describes it. A number of added signs of this kind make a very effective trick.



**With Cigarettes.**—While the performer's assistant is out of the room he hands a member of the audience his cigarette case, and asks him to add to the cigarettes in it or to take some away for the time being. He is then to remember the number of cigarettes left and to put the cigarette case in his pocket. The principal hides himself behind some piece of furniture when the assistant returns to the room, so that it is obvious he does not make any sign to her. The assistant goes up to the person who has the cigarette case and at once tells him how many cigarettes there are in it. The experiment can be repeated.

A confederate is needed for this trick. The signs are given to the assistant by the confederate. The right hand holding the lapel of the coat can be "one", the left hand held in the same way "two"—and so on. It is quite an effective trick for a party.

**Sealed Letter Reading.**—Use a very thin small envelope; also carbon paper of the finest grade, so that the merest touch will give an impression. Cut this paper into pieces that will fit inside the envelopes. Then place these pieces in the envelopes with the carbon side towards the backs of the envelopes. Place in the envelopes, at the back of this carbon paper, a sheet of rather stiff white paper. This should be of a surface that will readily take a carbon impression. Then seal just the mere tip of the flaps of the envelopes.

Now arrange the envelopes as follows :—Take a thin sheet of paper the same size of the envelope and place it on top of a prepared envelope. Then place under the prepared envelope an envelope that is *not prepared*. This makes a set. Arrange two or three of these sets, one on top of the other, and come forward with these in the left hand like a pack of cards. Also have a sharp pointed hard lead pencil for the spectator to write with.

Then ask a member of your audience to think of some question about the future that he or she would like to have answered, and when that has been done say : “Here is a slip of paper and an envelope.” At the same time take off the top or prepared envelope with the slip of paper on it and in position.

This is done with the right hand, and you say : “Take

this in your left hand and hold it as I show you, so that no-one can see what you write." As this is said the magician illustrates how materials are to be held, by placing them in position against the palm of his left hand, but holding them with the right hand while so doing.

Then the conjurer says: "Hold your hand up this way so that no-one can see." You add: "Write plainly, and when you have finished, please double the paper in halves." You appear not to watch your collaborator while he or she is writing, but in reality you watch closely enough with occasional glances to see that all conditions are complied with. This is where the skill of the performer comes in. He must have had enough experience to be certain of himself and to act with perfect composure and self-assurance.

As the assistant has no idea of what is intended, his or her mind is occupied with thinking of a question to write, and also with listening to instructions. They naturally leave the slip of paper on the prepared envelope when writing.

As soon as the writing is completed the writer doubles the paper in half, and the performer reaches for the envelope with his right hand. This taking of the envelope is done in a matter-of-fact manner with nothing said, and it is doubtful if the assistant could tell that the envelope has been taken away. Running talk and

instruction take the attention of the person assisting as well as other spectators who may be closely watching. As a rule, the other spectators hardly ever watch closely, for the reason announced, that no-one must see what is written.

What is actually being done is this : While directing the manner of folding, and as the envelope is taken, the right hand is brought back to left, and without pause of any kind the prepared envelope with the impression is put underneath the pack, the right hand then, *with the same motion*, carrying back the unprepared envelope from the top of the pack.

An artistic use of "mis-direction" is here brought into play. The conjurer does not look at his hands at all while making this motion, but is watching his helper intently as he is folding the paper. The spectators invariably look where the performer looks, if they look at all.

The moment the paper is properly folded, the magician says : "We will now place it in the envelope and seal it." The envelope is then opened with the fingers of the right hand as if intending to help, and then suddenly, as if changing his mind, the conjurer says : "You just place it in the envelope and seal it yourself." As this is said the unprepared envelope is handed over to the person, who proceeds properly to fold and seal the

envelope. Then instruct your assistant to place it in a pocket and retain it until after the contents have been read.

If it is desired to have more questions prepared, simply pass to others in a similar manner.

Generally, when working from a stage, two assistants go down their respective aisles, having four or five people write, and in this way several copies of questions can be secured. It is an easy matter for the assistants to obtain the required number of copies and not attract attention to their movements if in the meantime the performer will carry on some slight diversion on the stage. This will hold the eyes of the spectators and at the same time keep up the interest of the audience.

Of course, the conjurer should illustrate in front of the spectators what the assistants are to do, and begin his little diversion only after they have begun to work. In some cases, after the writings have been completed, the assistants return behind the scenes and open and read the copies. They write the questions plainly on a sheet of paper, lay them on a table and set the table on the stage.

While they are doing this the magician completes his little diversions, and then, seating himself at the table with his head in his hand, he reads and answers the questions one by one.

## **MISCELLANEOUS TRICKS**





## MISCELLANEOUS TRICKS

**The Newspaper Trick.**—Not long ago a clever young magician came into the office of the London daily newspaper to which I belong and, after a chat with me, said :

“Would you like to see a new trick ?”

I nodded, and he picked up a copy of a newspaper of that day's date which was lying among others on a table. Picking up a pair of scissors which lay upon my desk, he requested me to cut out a pattern of any shape I wished.

“When you are cutting out the pattern, which can be regular or irregular in design,” he said, “take care that you are cutting right through the newspaper.”

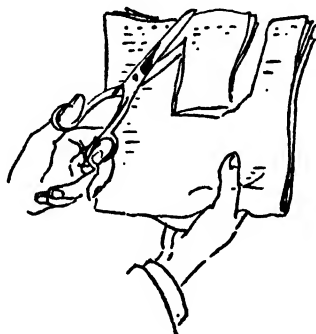
I did as he suggested, and when I had finished the cutting I had in my hand a bunch of twelve clippings of similar shape from the newspaper, which was one of twenty-four pages (one clipping for each two pages).

“Now,” continued my friend, the magician, “put the newspaper and the scissors aside, and take away from the little bunch of clippings any one of them you like, but take care that I do not see the cutting you choose.”

When I had done this I kept the cutting I had selected

tightly in my hand, passing the rest back to the magician, who set fire to them in my presence with a match.

Then with his back towards me he began to describe the contents of the cutting held in my hand which he certainly could not see. He gave an accurate description of the contents of each side of this clipping. How was it done ?



Well, in the first place, the newspaper which the magician picked up so casually from the table was not so innocent as it looked. In fact, when he entered the room he had quietly placed it there among the other newspapers. It had the appearance of a normal newspaper of that day's date, but actually it had been prepared for the trick. Each of the pages was duplicated—that is to say, two newspapers had been used to make one. Thus there were two front pages, one behind the other, two page two's, and so on.

In order to avoid making the faked newspaper too thick, the magician had used only half of each of the two newspapers to form one fake newspaper. Thus he duplicated only the principal pages—the front, middle and chief inside pages, so that the whole contained only twenty-four pages and was the same thickness as the normal newspaper.

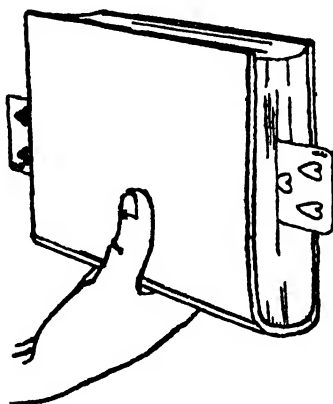
Now, when I had cut the pattern right through with the scissors, taken one of the clippings away and handed the rest of them to the magician to burn, the position was that he received from me a bunch of eleven clippings, each of them, excepting one, being in duplicate.

While preparing to burn the clippings, the magician ran his eye swiftly through them and quickly spotted the “lonely” cutting. He knew instantly that I had chosen the corresponding cutting, and so he took the “lonely” clipping and crumpled it in his hand. He burned the rest ; but when his back was turned towards me he was able, under the pretence of “thought-reading”, to read and describe both sides of the cutting he held in his hand.

**A Book Mystery.**—A great deal of entertainment and mystification can be obtained from a trick in which a book and a card are used.

Generally, the card I use for the purpose of this trick is the King of Diamonds, but it can be any card from the pack, and what happens is this.

Quite casually I take a book which is lying about, and, drawing the King of Diamonds from the pack of cards, announce that I am going to present a demonstration of thought-reading.



With the book in my right hand and the card in my left, I go to one of my audience and request him to push the card somewhere into the book, but leaving a bit of it protruding—that is to say, he must not push the card right into the book.

I point out to him that he is placing the card in whatever part of the book he wishes, and that I do not in any way force his choice.

He is satisfied that this is so, and then with the bit of the card protruding from the book, I turn to another member of the audience, preferably a lady this time, hand the book to her and, moving away, request that she should open the book at the place where the card has been inserted.

She does this, and finds that the card is inserted between, shall we say, pages 81 and 82.

"Now," I say, "which of these two pages would you like me to describe to you?"

"Page 82," the lady may say.

I then request her to concentrate on the contents of that page, and I proceed, though I am some distance away and my eyes are closed, to describe in detail the contents of page 82 of the book.

Should she choose page 81, then I can do the same thing.

In this trick, the secret is that I had already myself inserted a card, a duplicate King of Diamonds, between pages 81 and 82.

But as I handed the book to the member of the audience, inviting him to insert the King of Diamonds which I gave him, my hand, in quite a natural position over the end of the book, hid the end of the card already there.

When the card had been inserted, I turned round to

the lady, and, during those moments, I pushed my friend's card right into the book and handed the other end of the book, from which my card was sticking, to the lady. As I had already memorized the contents of pages 81 and 82, it was not difficult for me to describe them.

The chance of the other card being found in the book is really very slight, because the lady has no opportunity to turn over the pages, even if she should see any reason to do so.

**The Thumb Tie.**—The thumb tie came originally from Japan.

The performer starts by inviting two members of the audience to come on the stage and tie his thumbs together. He gives each man a short piece of string and offers his hands for examination. When the voluntary assistants are satisfied that neither the two short pieces of string nor the performer's hands have been prepared in any way for the trick, the magician brings his hands together, crosses his thumbs, and asks one of his assistants to pass one of the pieces of string twice round his thumbs and then to tie the two ends together with the knot at the top, so that everybody can see it. The other

assistant is asked to put the second string between the performer's thumbs, pass it twice round the first string and then tie the two ends together on the top thumb.

The conjurer holds up his hands so that the audience may see that the thumbs are securely tied.

One of the performer's professional assistants—a member of his company—hands out a number of small wooden hoops for examination. On receiving them back from the audience, the assistant stands a little distance away from the performer and throws the hoops to him, one at a time.

Immediately the performer catches one of the hoops, he contrives to get it on one of his arms, although his thumbs are still tied; as each hoop is caught and passed on to an arm the performer holds his hands towards the audience, showing that his thumbs are still tied.

The illusionist then invites the two members of the audience who are assisting him to examine the hoops on his arms and satisfy themselves that there is no opening in any of the hoops. A little comedy can be introduced at this stage of the trick. After the assistant on the right has inspected some of the hoops the performer turns quickly to the other assistant and says :

“Perhaps you would like to examine the hoops?”

With that the performer—his thumbs still tied—



hands the man a few of the hoops ! The audience are quick to see that the performer has really repeated the trick under the eyes of the man assisting him.

The trick is then varied in several ways. For example the performer and his assistant link their hands together, and immediately they have done so the performer appears to pass his arms through those of his assistant, though his thumbs are still tied.

A pole is brought on the stage and while it is held, perpendicularly, the performer passes his arms round it and again shows that his thumbs are still tied. Before the assistants have recovered from their surprise the magician has freed himself from the pole and is asking them to look at his thumbs once more ; they are still tied !

The performer concludes the trick by repeating it quickly two or three times.

The main secret of the trick lies in the way in which the performer holds his thumbs when they are being tied. No two pairs of thumbs are quite alike ; therefore, anyone who wishes to learn this trick may find that he can make it easier for himself by slightly altering the position of the thumbs. It may be necessary to put the thumbs farther apart or to bend them slightly so the tips of the thumbs come under the hands. As a rule, the greater the distance between the tips of the thumbs the easier is the trick.

When the performer is being tied there is nothing to prevent him from pressing the lower thumb down, thus putting a slight strain on the string and preventing the assistant from tying the two thumbs too closely together.

The manner in which the second string is tied really helps the performer because it divides the first string into two loops.

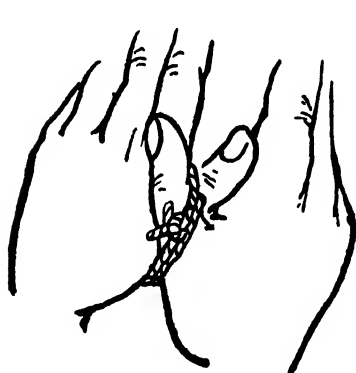


FIG. 1.

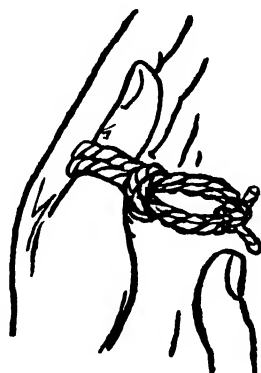


FIG. 2.

If the learner will now have his thumbs tied together in the way described he will see at once that although the string is tightly tied when the thumbs are spread apart, the tying is not so tight when the thumbs are close together, one on the top of the other. Therefore, to release one hand the performer quickly brings his thumbs together, when he is able to slip the lower

one out of the loop. The learner may find that the feat comes easier to him if he slips the top thumb out of its loop, but most performers work in the other way because the released thumb is naturally hidden by the other.

It will be seen that the second string holds the loop out stiffly, so that the performer has little difficulty in getting his thumb back into the loop immediately he has caught a hoop and passed it on to his arm ; then he spreads his thumbs apart again, thus putting a strain on the strings, and he can at once show his thumbs securely and tightly tied.

The performer does not wait until he has caught a hoop before he releases one of his thumbs. He slips a thumb out of its loop, but keeps the hands close together. Then having caught the hoop he can instantly pass it on to his arm, and before the audience have recovered from their surprise he has got his thumb back into the loop.

When Ten Ichi did the trick he used string covered with Japanese paper, which probably made the performance of the trick a little easier for him, but an English magician will not detract from the effect of the trick by using prepared string. The learner should start by using fairly thick stiff strings, and the first piece should be of such a length that when it is passed twice

round the thumbs the ends are quite short ; then it will be impossible for anyone to tie them very tightly. Naturally, the thicker the string the easier the trick.

By the way, it is advisable to have a professional assistant to throw the hoops because he knows exactly how to throw them to suit the performer. Sometimes two or three hoops can be thrown by members of the audience, but it will generally be found that they will bungle the job, throw the hoops wide of the mark, and so spoil the effect of the trick. The performer cannot do the trick quickly and cleanly if he has to stoop down to the stage to pick up a hoop.

The above method, the usual one, demands a great deal of practice, but the trick is worth the effort. Some thumbs are much more suitable for the trick than others ; a performer who has the misfortune to have large joints is handicapped.

Here is a much easier method of performing the trick. The thumbs are held side by side and a string is passed under them. The hands are held up so that the audience get a good view of the position of the thumbs and the string. Then the hands are turned down in order that the string may be tied on the tops of the thumbs, and immediately the hands are in that position the tip of the first finger of the right hand is inserted in the string under the thumbs. If the fingers are curled

in slightly no-one can see that the first finger has been employed in gathering up a little slack—only a little, but ample for the performer's purpose. With the first finger secretly in position, the performer can ask the

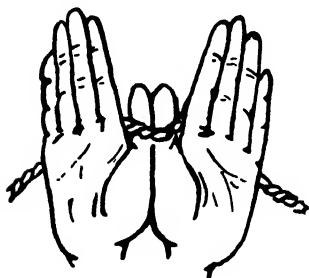


FIG. 3.

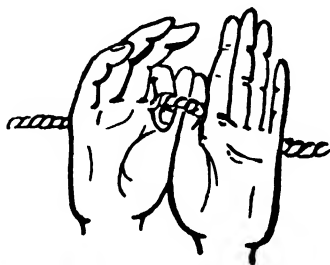


FIG. 4.

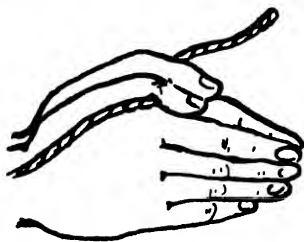


FIG. 5.

man who is tying his thumbs to pull hard and tie a tight knot. Directly the knot has been tied the performer takes his finger out of the loop. The slack is now under the thumbs, but the performer must show the under

side of his thumbs once more to convince the audience that they have been tied tightly ; so he has to hide the slack and he does this by working the string upwards with the sides of the first fingers while he raises his hands. The job can be done in the fraction of a second. Then the performer lowers his hands again, working the slack back to its original position.

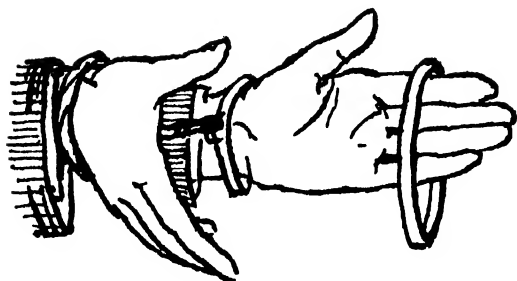
Here is another way of obtaining the necessary slack. The performer, having submitted the strings and his hands for examination, holds his hands together and asks the assistant on his right to put one of the strings under his thumbs. The performer then turns quickly round to the other assistant and asks him to tie the strings together, but during the moment occupied in turning from one assistant to the other the performer bends his fingers and locks them together. The performer also gets hold of the string with the middle finger of his right hand and draws it down for an inch into his closed hands, thus getting all the slack he wants. To the audience and to the assistant on the left the string still appears to pass straight under the thumbs, which can be crossed at this stage or held side by side.

When either the second or third method is adopted only one string is used and the trick is fairly easy, but the performer has to be careful not to expose the slack. Either of these methods is quite good when

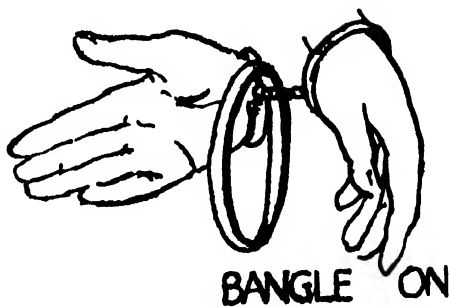
the magician is performing to children or an audience which is not too sophisticated, but at a big public performance the first method should be used. If he can do so without creating suspicion, the performer should choose the two members of the audience whom he wishes to help him. If there is a man in the audience who is anxious to make things as difficult as possible for the performer he will probably get up at once when the magician asks for the assistance of two members of the audience, but if possible the performer should pretend not to see that man. Let him turn towards others who are not so eager to leave their seats for the stage. Most people are kind to the man who is entertaining them, but be careful of the "awkward" person.

**The Bangle.**—One of the most baffling little tricks I know is that in which you produce a cheap metal bangle and a piece of cord.

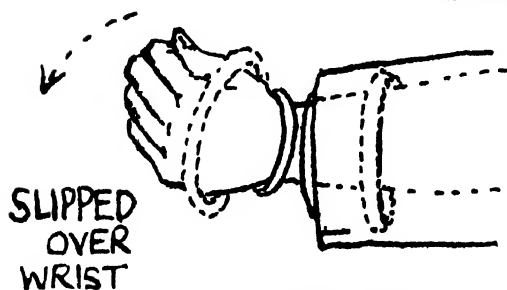
Invite someone securely to fasten your wrists with the cord, and next, holding the bangle in your fingers, turn your back to the audience for a moment or two, and then turn round to reveal the astonishing fact that the bangle is actually on the cord which is tied round your wrists.



BANGLE OFF



BANGLE ON



SLIPPED  
OVER  
WRIST

DUPLICATE  
BANGLE





How did it get there? It was certainly impossible for you to have removed the cord from your wrists and then readjust it.

Is there any fake or trick in the bangle? No, it is the sort of bangle you could buy at any cheap store. What then is the explanation?

It is this: when you started the trick, there was a second bangle, exactly the same as the other one, already on your left wrist concealed under your coat sleeve.

When you turned your back on your audience for a moment you slipped the bangle which you showed them into one of your coat pockets (it is not difficult to do this, although your wrists are tied). The next part of the trick consisted in working the bangle over your left wrist on to the cord binding the wrists.

With a little practice you will find yourself able to do this exceptionally neat trick quite quickly, which will lend to its value.

There is a means of making the trick even more elaborate and mystifying. When employing this method begin by telling your audience that you will take a precaution, making it impossible for the bangle to be exchanged at any stage of the trick.

For this purpose, you say, you will use a small piece of a gummed label upon which any member of the

audience can write his name or initials. When this has been done, the piece of gummed label can be stuck by anyone on to the bangle.

Yet when you turn round at the conclusion of the trick there is the same piece of gummed paper fastened to the bangle.

How is that part of it done? Well, it is not so difficult, but you must beforehand smear a little glycerine on to the bangle you show to the audience.

You need not smear glycerine over the whole bangle, but only on part of it. When you hold the bangle to enable your friend to stick on his label it will be easy to hold the parts smeared lightly with glycerine towards him, and he will not notice it.

The use of the glycerine enables you at once to remove the piece of gummed paper when you turn your back. Then there is nothing else to do but transfer it to the other bangle.

**The Three Boxes.**—A little-known and most puzzling trick is that with three match-boxes. Two of the boxes are shown to be empty, while the third contains a few matches which, as you demonstrate to your audience, naturally make a rattling noise when shaken.

“Now,” you say to your audience, “I am going to

show you a trick based on the principle of the Three Card Trick. I take up the only box of the three which contains matches, rattle it to show that they are really there, and place it just in front of me. Now, I will slowly change the positions of the three boxes. There! Where is the 'rattler' now?"

Your friends will point to a particular box, the movements of which they have followed most carefully, but they will be wrong. You can repeat this trick several times without being detected. It involves no sleight of hand and, indeed, no dexterity. You move the boxes slowly, so there is apparently nothing to bewilder your "victims".

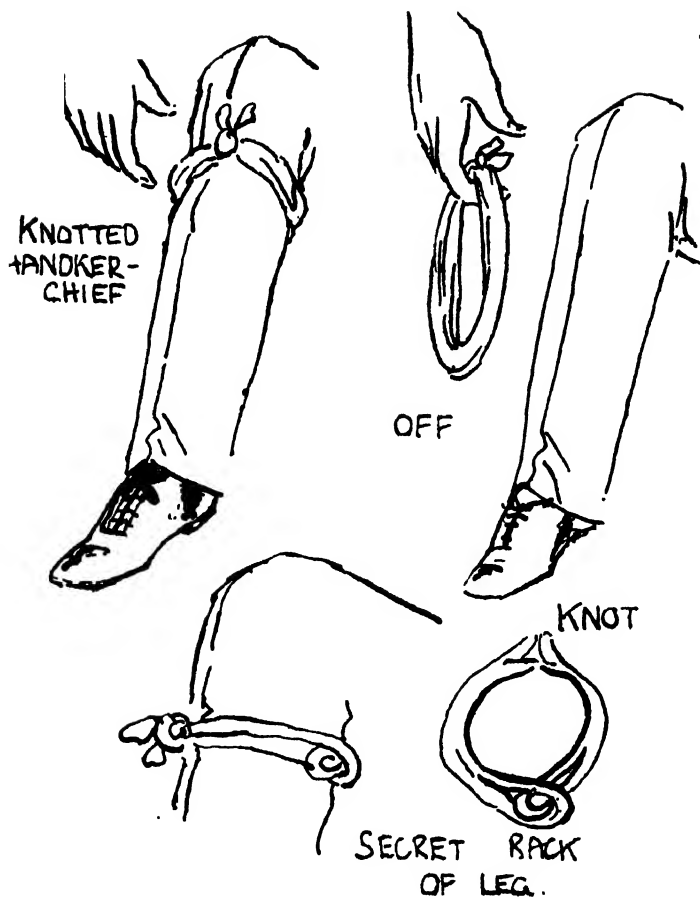
There are not many good tricks to-day in which the sleeve is used, but this is one of them. The secret is that, pushed into your sleeve is a fourth box containing a number of matches and also a small piece of tinfoil. The box you pick up from the table and shake is really an empty one. It is the box up your sleeve which does the rattling, so that when your friends follow the movements of the box you have picked up they are on the wrong scent.

The reason why I advise you to place a small piece of tinfoil in the hidden box is that, owing to the box being in your sleeve, there is a certain tendency for the sound to be deadened. The noise of the tinfoil, together with

the matches in the box, will be loud enough to overcome this defect. The concealed box should be placed over and across your forearm, and to prevent it falling out of position it is wise to use a little glue or other adhesive substance to make it stick securely to your arm.

**The Handkerchief Trick.**—In the first class as a trick is that of tying a handkerchief round your leg, knotting it securely and then pulling the handkerchief through your leg, with the knot still securely in position ! As you will gather, it is an illusion, but a very effective one, and the secret of it lies in the method of tying. In fact, you make a secret tie at the back, so that the handkerchief, in reality, does not go properly round the leg.

The method of making the tie at the back will be made clear to you by the drawing. As you see, a sort of loop is made, the right hand being above the left while it is being formed. This loop will hold quite securely and will not come undone when you tie the ordinary knot in front. A little practice will soon make you efficient in this extraordinarily effective trick.





**The Postcards.**—You ought to be able to mystify most people with this little trick.

The effect of the trick is that you show your audience, a number of picture postcards of London. All the pictures are different and are views of places well known to your audience.

Then, sitting at your table, produce a number of slips of paper and ask your audience to call out the names of the most famous places in London. As the names of these places are called out you write them down each on a slip of paper. The slips of paper, folded, should be thrown into a hat which you have on the table.

When this is done, go among the audience with the packet of postcards and ask someone to select one of the cards and to sit on it without looking at the postcard.

Next hand the hat round and request someone to pick out one of the slips of paper.

Tell the person to unfold the paper and to look at the name upon it. He will find that it is the name of the place shown on the selected postcard.

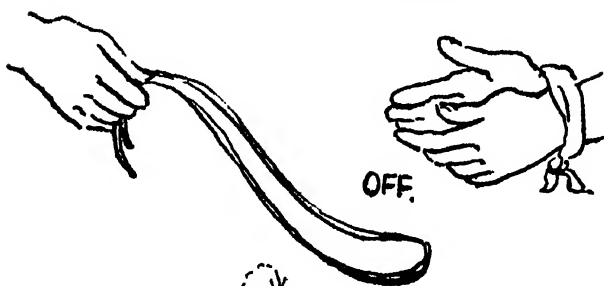
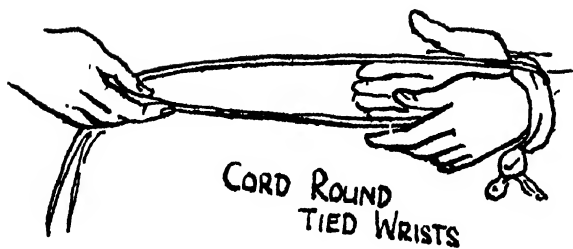
The secret is that the packet of postcards you hand round for selection purposes is not the one you show in the first place. It is a fake pack with all the cards the same. Of course, you are careful not to let anyone discover that, as you have neatly changed the pack when you go back to the table.



The rest of the trick is that you write down the name of that place—say, Westminster Abbey—on each of the slips, ignoring the various places suggested by the audience.

**The Cord and the Handkerchief.**—A mysterious effect can be produced by allowing your wrists to be tied with a handkerchief in the manner shown in the illustration. Now, get someone to pass a piece of cord or string over the handkerchief and to retain the ends. So that the secret of the trick will not be discovered, request that a cloth or large handkerchief be placed over your wrists, and when this is done ask your friend holding the ends of the cord to pull. To his surprise he will pull the cord right through the handkerchief which binds your wrists.

Actually, what happens is that under the cover of the cloth you work one of your fingers or thumbs behind that part of the cord which goes round the handkerchief and wriggle it over the back of your hand. The result is that the cord will come away when pulled by your friend. Be careful that the handkerchief is not too tightly tied around your wrists, else it will restrict the movements of your fingers, and also see that the knot of the handkerchief does not obstruct the cord and stop it temporarily from coming away.





**Telling the Card.**—Would you like to know a little card trick which should baffle your friends ?

Here is one the secret of which is simple. Yet if you do this trick with the proper amount of showmanship it will prove to be remarkably effective.

Produce a pack of cards and a long handkerchief and ask that someone should blindfold you.

When this is done set a table with a party of friends. Tell any one of them thoroughly to shuffle the pack, and then to deal out the cards, one by one, on to the table. Look up towards the ceiling and tell them that, although you cannot see the pack, you will indicate each time that a court card is thrown on to the table.

Your challenge is accepted, and your friends are surprised and puzzled when you carry out your promise.

The secret, as I have already hinted, is exceedingly simple. You have previously arranged for a confederate to sit next to you, or near you, at the table. When a court card is thrown down he gives you a kick under the table. What could be simpler ? But it rests with you to make it as effective as possible.

**The Table-cloth.**—I advise you to try this trick when your wife or mother is out shopping, otherwise a domestic crisis may arise.

What you have to do is to pull the table-cloth from the table without spilling or breaking anything and leaving all the articles in their place.

That sounds difficult, you think. After all, a table laid for breakfast or for lunch contains many articles such as plates, spoons, jugs and so on.

If you were to try it without knowing the secret you would certainly break everything on the table.

And again the secret is quite simple.

In the first place attempt the trick only where you have a table with a perfectly smooth surface. Draw up the end of the table-cloth until it is exactly level with the surface of the table. Pull the cloth hard and swiftly and it will come away without upsetting anything.

See that the "pull" is exactly in line with the surface of the table, otherwise the trick will go wrong.

**The Pound Note.**—I had believed that the trick with the pound note and the pencil was so well known that it should not be included in this book.

Yet I have received a number of letters from people who ask me to tell them how this trick is done. They say they have seen it many times but do not know what the secret is.

In order to test how many persons knew the solution

of this trick I approached twelve of my friends of different occupations. Only two of them knew. So here it is :

Obtain or produce a pound note and a pencil of the ordinary slim type in general use. Explain that when properly manipulated, a pound note can yield great force. Ask your assistant to hold the pencil between his outstretched hands and to hold it taut.

Then fold the note longways, smooth the edge where it is folded in half, and use some patter about the necessity for having a sharp edge. Make one or two light preliminary blows with the note on the pencil, as though you were just getting into form. Then strike a swift blow, and to everyone's surprise the pencil will be cut clean in two.

There is nothing hard in the fold of the note. The secret is simply that you shoot your finger out very quickly as you bring the note down, and, of course, withdraw it with equal speed. It is all the work of a moment, and by no means easy to detect.

**A Secret Code.**—Into the realm of magic and mystery certainly come secret codes and methods of communication.

I have seen scores of secret codes, many of them

extremely difficult to use, because they were so complicated.

But here is one which is simple and yet will almost certainly defy the efforts of your friends to find its secret.

In writing your message you simply use the previous letter of the alphabet—that is to say, “A” instead of “B”, and so on. Thus—RDMC RNLD BZRG would mean “Send some cash”, a very popular form of S.O.S. When you want to indicate the letter “A” you must use the letter “Z” as no letter comes before “A”.

**A Slate Trick.**—Tricks with slates are always popular, particularly if the slates are genuine.

So here is a trick with an ordinary school slate.

Show the slate to be perfectly clean on both sides, and as further proof that it can contain no secret writing wipe it with a damp cloth.

Then ask your friends to mention any number between one and five, and as they do so tear out a page of newspaper and wrap the slate in it.

Hand the paper containing the slate to one of your friends and ask him to sit on it.

Supposing the number chosen is four, you should

next count up to that number loudly and slowly, and then ask the audience to have a look at the slate. They will find the chosen number written in chalk on the slate.

It is quite a simple little trick, but can help to provide amusement. All you need do is previously to write the numbers one to five in chalk on each of the first pages of the newspaper. Thus page one would have number one written in chalk on the sheet, but, of course, in such a way that no one would notice it.

If number four is chosen by your audience just tear out, in quite a casual way, the sheet with that number written on it. Done in a natural, quick way no one should suspect this move.

See that the number is written in a place where it will come into contact with the slate. The sitting on the slate by your friend does the rest.

When the trick is done whisk away the paper and get on with another trick.

**A Little Pleasantry.**—The complete conjurer must know one or two good “catches”.

Such “catches” may be really absurd, but some excellent fun can be got from them.

This is a thought-reading catch. Tell your audience



that you are an accomplished thought-reader and that you are about to prove it.

Request that a member of your audience should retire into a far corner of the room and there write down anything that he likes.

Say to your audience: "If this gentleman will only think hard of what he is writing, while he is actually writing, the thought wave will come to me. In fact, if he will do this while he is writing down his secret message I will undertake to write exactly the same."

Naturally, the audience as well as the person concerned will be incredulous.

Then the trick begins. Request the person in the corner to tell you when he is starting to write and when he has finished doing so.

Then with a furrowed brow write on your piece of paper and ask that someone should read out the message written by the man in the corner.

"Ah!" you will exclaim, "I have written exactly the same." The audience will be greatly surprised until they see your piece of paper with the words "Exactly the same" written on it.

It is only a little joke, but if you introduce showmanship into it, it can be made amusing, especially as an end to a conjuring performance or as a means of dealing with some troublesome person in the audience.

**Two Match Tricks.**—Do you think it possible to strike a match, dip it in water, and yet be able to light it again? It is possible, so long as you are quick and deft enough.

You should have a glass of water close to you when you strike the match, for no time must be lost between the striking of the match and dipping it into the water. If the whole match-head is allowed to become ignited this little trick will not, of course, work. You must get the match into the water in such a way that a little bit of the sulphur is left unburned and dry.

And do you know the secret of that mysterious little match trick with which I have deceived hundreds of people?

I mean the trick in which I strike safety matches on the sole of my shoe, saying as I do so that the whole secret lies in the manner in which the match is held between the fingers.

Everyone else tries to strike matches on their shoes, but nothing happens except that a large number of matches is wasted. All the talk about holding the match in this or that way is just nonsense.

The real secret is that I have previously rubbed the soles of my shoes with the edge of a safety matchbox.

**The Banana Mystery.**—Your friends will be surprised when after dinner, you take a banana from the dessert stand and announce that it will break in three parts as you peel it. They will be more surprised when they see this happen.

They will be really quite interested when you pick up another banana and say that this one will break in two or four pieces as you take off the skin. And again it happens.

A little secret preparation is necessary, and the implement required is a needle. With the needle just prick or stab right round the edge of the banana skin at the point where you wish the banana itself to break.

This process of puncturing the banana is quite simple and if properly done, the needle marks, being so slight, will not be noticed. By puncturing the banana in two places, it will, of course, fall in three pieces when you peel it, and you can thus adjust your puncturing of several bananas to any number you wish.

**Black and Red.**—One of the most effective and yet simplest tricks with cards known to me is that in which you are able to pick out the black and red cards, although the pack is face downwards. The trick can be performed

with any pack, and if properly done, will baffle most people. It is advisable, though not necessary, for someone first of all thoroughly to shuffle the pack, When this is done, separate the red cards from the black and say to your friends: "Now, you see, I have divided the pack into two parts, red and black. We will mix all these cards together in the 'pudding' shuffle and see what happens."

The "pudding" shuffle is one in which the cards are placed together on a table face downwards and thoroughly mixed in the manner of mixing a pudding. Anyone can assist in the mixing.

When the cards have in this way been thoroughly shuffled, you begin to separate the black from the red once more, though you cannot see the faces of the cards, and you may go on doing this until all the red cards and all the black are in two distinct heaps on the table.

The secret of the trick is that you have been able quietly to bend all the red cards slightly backwards and the black ones slightly forward. This is done secretly, when, in the first place, you have separated the red cards from the black. As you are holding both heaps in your hand, it is easy to give each of them the necessary little squeeze.

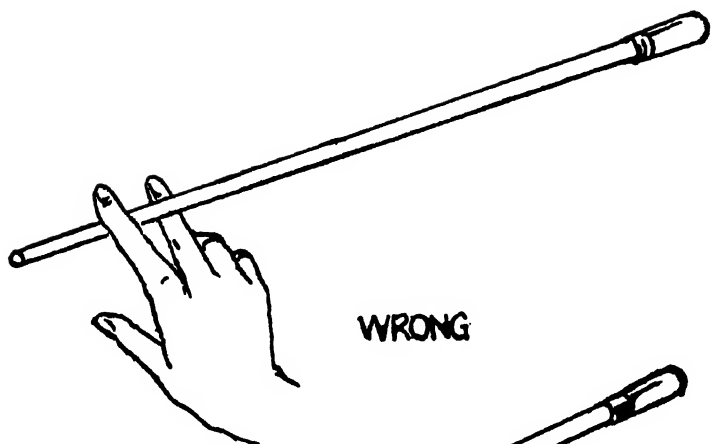
The real reason why you used the "pudding" shuffle after you have bent the cards in this way is that an

ordinary shuffle would destroy the bending and make the trick impossible. Merely pushing the cards about on the table does not affect the slight bending.

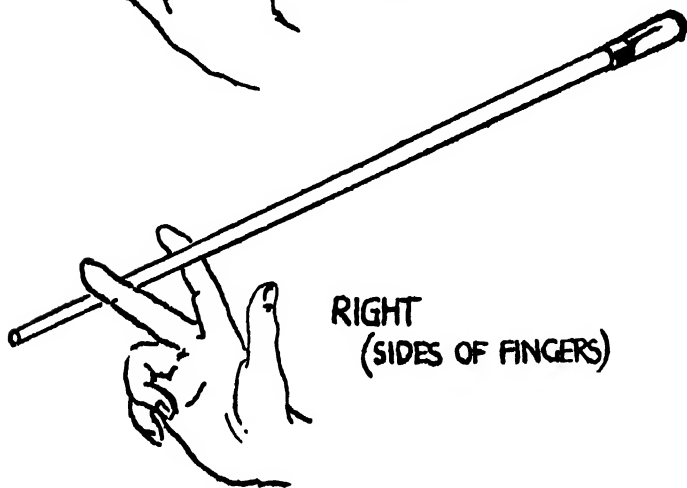
**The Umbrella Trick.**—If you hand an umbrella or a heavy walking-stick to a friend and ask him to hold it horizontally before him, merely gripping the extreme end of the umbrella with the tops of his first and middle fingers, he will fail, the umbrella falling down miserably. The reason for this is that he attempts to hold the umbrella using the back and front of his fingers, whereas if he used the *sides* he would be able to keep the gamp on a level keel, so to speak. The umbrella must be held as near the tips of the fingers as possible.

After you have demonstrated how it can be done, you can mislead your friends by holding the umbrella in your left hand and wrongly demonstrating the position that the fingers of the right hand should be in, so that when your friend tries, he will hold the umbrella with his fingers in a flat position, that is, palm upwards, instead of using the sides of his fingers, with the palm in a sloping position.





WRONG



RIGHT  
(SIDES OF FINGERS)



**The Two Pennies.**—And here is a little trick with two pennies which never fails to deceive when properly performed. Sit at a table and place two pennies in front of you on the edge of the table about six inches apart.

“Now,” you say to your friends who are watching, “I will take a penny in each hand, close my hands, place the left hand under the table, and the right one I will place over the centre of the table in this fashion. Now I will open my right hand and it is empty. Here is my left hand from under the table, and the two pennies, as you see, are in it.”

What you appear to have done, in fact, is to have passed a penny through the table.

Of course, you have done nothing of the sort, though few people will guess what really happened, which is that when you pretended to take the two pennies up from the table you actually slid the right-hand penny on to your lap, so that your right closed fist, as it lay over the centre of the table, was really empty, while you, with your left hand, which already contained a penny, gathered up the second penny from your lap, and, with a little patter, placed your left fist under the table.

In performing this trick do not let your friends get too near.





**An Experiment in Hypnotism.**—But for real fun just try this little experiment in hypnotism. Ask a friend to stand with his arm stretched out straight to the side with the palm upwards. The arm should be level with the shoulder.

Next, approaching him, ask that he should look straight into your eyes because “I am going to hypnotize you.”

Warn him that you will make him lift up his hand in spite of himself. Then stroke his hand softly but quickly several times and stop suddenly. In everyone’s view this hand will shoot upwards. Some people are better subjects for this experiment than others.

**A Coin Mystery.**—Produce a glass of water, a handkerchief, and a shilling. Spill a little of the water on the floor—but not on the best carpet—to show that it is really water. Now, placing the shilling in the centre of the handkerchief, cover the glass of water with the latter, still holding the coin through the handkerchief.

“Now,” you say, “I am going to let the shilling drop into the water. Listen for it.”

Your friends distinctly hear the sound of the shilling

as it drops to the bottom of the glass, but yet, when you whisk the handkerchief away, there is no coin in the glass of water. Then lift the glass from the table and show the shilling underneath the table-cloth or elsewhere, still wet from being immersed in water.

In order to do this trick, you should provide yourself with a piece of glass of the same shape and size as the shilling (it is quite easy to do this). Now, really, when you pour out a little water from the glass, you manage to get a few drops of it on the shilling to make the coin later look as though it had been in the water. Quietly slip the shilling under the table-cloth or any other hiding-place that is handy at the moment. What you are holding in the handkerchief is actually the shilling-shaped glass, and, of course, your friends think it really is a shilling. When you drop the disc in the glass of water, they hear a sound of what they think is a shilling falling, but as the disc is of glass it cannot in the ordinary way be noticed lying at the bottom in the water.

**Stop !**—And here is another simple yet effective card trick which you will find a useful addition to your repertoire of magic. Hand out the cards to be shuffled and then hold the pack in your left hand while your

arm is outstretched. Close your eyes and with your right hand draw back first the top card towards you so that it is half-way off the pack. Do the same with the second and third cards, and so on until some member of your audience shouts "Stop!" (as you have previously requested).

You obey the instruction and stop. Then you say: "Now, it is obvious that I have no idea at which card I have been commanded to stop. My eyes are closed, but the audience will be able to see what the card is." You then lift off the top of the pack the small heap formed when you were told to stop, and show the card at which you had, as commanded, stopped.

Next, hand the pack to be shuffled once more, and when this has been done, you glance swiftly through it, saying that you are trying to discover the chosen card.

"I am afraid I have failed," you say, "but I will try another method."

You then hold the pack high in the air with your left and right hand (one over the other) and suddenly let it drop on the floor. If the pack has been nicely squared off, all the cards will lie on the floor face downwards, excepting one, which will flutter face upwards, and that is the chosen card.

This is the explanation. When the cards are handed

back to you after the first shuffling, you will find it quite easy to get a quick glimpse of the bottom card as you place the pack in your left hand.

With your eyes closed, you draw the cards on the top of the pack towards you one by one quite honestly, but when you pull from the top of the pack the small heap, say about half a dozen cards—it depends upon where you have been told to stop—you really pull away the bottom card also ; consequently it is the bottom card which the audience see and which they think they have chosen.

To make the card appear face upward on the floor is quite simple. You see, when you look through the pack pretending to have failed in finding the chosen card, actually you have found it and have quietly placed it on top of the pack. You square up the pack, but allow the edge of the top card slightly to protrude over the rest of the pack, so that when the cards fall to the ground, the rush of air hits the top card and overturns it, while the rest of the cards just drop like a stone.

**A Double—Not Mixed.**—You wouldn't think it possible to pour whisky and water into the same glass without allowing them to mix, would you ? But it can

be done. Pour a quantity of whisky into a clean, empty glass and then place on the top of the whisky a thin slice of a bottle cork.

Now pour water from a jug in such a way that the water flows gently in a thin jet on the cork and spreads itself quietly over the whisky. The cork will naturally rise to the top as you pour the water on it, and finally you can take the cork out of the water, leaving the whisky underneath and the water on top, definitely separate. It is a curious and amusing experiment.

**Four Handkerchiefs and a Wand.**—Inviting two members of the audience to help him in a trick, the magician hands to each of them a piece of silk cord, about four yards long, and two silk handkerchiefs, so that the assistants may be convinced that the articles are not specially prepared for the trick. The illusionist also hands his magic wand to another member of the audience, who is asked if the wand is merely a short, decorated stick. The answer is always "Yes".

Taking the two cords from his assistants, the performer hangs them on his wand and pulls them until all four ends are level. He then ties the cords securely round the wand and hands two ends to one assistant

and two to the other ; the assistants should stand on his right and left.

He next takes the four handkerchiefs from his assistants, and ties each one loosely on the cords, two being on one side of the wand and two on the other. Pushing the handkerchiefs up to the wand, the conjurer asks the assistants to hand him two of the cords, and both assistants have a free choice in the matter. With the two ends in his hands he ties a knot over the handkerchiefs and returns the cords to his assistants.

He tells his assistants that he wants them to pull very hard on the cords when he says "Pull"—and not before. "One, two, three—now, pull !" And then three things happen at once. The handkerchiefs, still tied, fall to the ground ; the conjurer has the wand in his hand, and the two assistants are seen holding the two cords, from which the knots made have disappeared.

A good trick and a very easy one—if the directions are carefully followed. The articles used are not prepared in any way and, if he wishes to do so, the magician can borrow the handkerchiefs needed for the trick.

When he takes the two cords from his assistants he throws the cords over his wand, held horizontally, and arranges them so that they hang evenly. Then, before the audience realize what he is doing, he takes the two ends of one cord in his right hand, the two ends of the

other in his left hand and ties a single knot in the middle of the wand. He does not call attention to the knot, and as he at once hands the cords to the assistants and asks them to pull until the cords are taut they have no opportunity of seeing the knot.

The handkerchiefs are then tied in the way mentioned ; they must be tied tightly round the cords. The performer turns to the assistant and asks him to hand over one of the cords he is holding ; the assistant has a free choice. A similar request is made to the other assistant and, with the two cords in his hands, the performer ties a single knot, and this is where he must be careful. He must remember, after he has tied the single knot, to hand to the assistant on his left the cord which he took from the assistant on his right, and the cord which was given him by the assistant on his left must go over to the assistant on his right. It is hardly likely that a mistake will be made because the movements are perfectly natural after a single knot has been tied over the handkerchiefs, but it is as well to remember that the mistake can be made and that if it is made there will be no trick !

For the rest, all that the illusionist has to do is to pull his wand free from the cords when he says "Pull !" At the same moment the handkerchiefs will fall to the ground and the knots will be untied.

**A Trick with a Waist.**—This is really a variation of the preceding trick, and it would not be advisable to put the two tricks into the same programme. Using the same cords the conjurer places them behind his back under his coat and brings them out in front of him. He asks one of the assistants to hold the two ends while he threads the other two through the sleeve of his coat and hands them to the assistant on that side of him. Then the other two ends are passed through the other sleeve and are handed to the other assistant. Each assistant is asked to hand up one of the cords and the magician ties a single knot in front of him. Then, when he asks the assistants to pull on the cords he quickly steps back and shows that he is free and that the assistants are holding the cords, from which the knot has disappeared.

The reader who has learned the previous trick will have no difficulty with this. When he takes the cords in his hands he secretly divides them so that the two ends of one cord are on his left and two on his right. To the audience the cords appear to be passed straight through his hands. When he puts his hands behind his back he has two loops of cord to manipulate; they have to be held under the coat for a time. The simplest plan is to have a little pocket sewn into the centre of the waistcoat and have a large nail sticking up in it.



Then, when the hands are placed behind, he can quickly pass both loops over the nail and he can at once bring his hands in front of him, running them down the cords, and to the audience he appears to have passed the cords genuinely round his waist.

The rest of the trick proceeds on the lines of the previous one. The conjurer ties a single knot in front of him and passes out the two cords in the way described. To release himself all that the performer has to do is to push the two loops off the nail and step backwards. When counting "one, two, three—" to his assistants, he should stand in a natural position with his right hand on his hip. Then he can "work the trick" in a fraction of a second as he steps away from the cords.

**Off with His Head!**—Here is yet another variation of the same trick, but two long pieces of thin string are used in place of the cords. The reader is cautioned not to attempt to do this trick in a small room unless he has had some experience in the art of "handling" volunteer assistants, for at one period of the trick the assistants must not be allowed to get a glimpse of his back. A conjurer, performing on a large stage, can manage his assistants by inviting them to sit down, and

he takes good care to see that the chairs have been placed where he wanted them to be !

The strings used in this trick should be longer than the cords used in the previous tricks, because the magician wants to keep his assistants as far away from him as possible. Having asked the assistants to examine the strings, he suggests that the assistants would like to sit down and he waves them to their chairs. While this little bit of business is going on he has secretly divided the strings in the way described with the cords. He then puts the centre of the strings—really, the two loops—behind his neck and tucks them down his neck so that they are held securely there. He brings the strings round to the front and hands two to one assistant and two to the other. He asks for one of the strings from both assistants and openly ties a single knot close up to his neck before handing back the strings to the assistants.

It is announced that the title of the trick is "Off with His Head !" because if there is a hitch in the trick his head always comes off. "Of course," he adds, "if there is no hitch then the trick comes off—it does, sometimes." Having worked up the excitement, the illusionist tells his assistants to pull on the strings and, of course, they come clear away—free from any knot—in front of the performer.

**A Quick One.**—This trick should live up to the name I have given it ; it is a capital little trick to sandwich in between two long tricks.

The conjurer asks someone to take a card from a pack and to retain it for a few moments. He then picks up a small slate and shows both sides of it to the audience. The person holding the card is asked to name it. The performer calls upon the spirits to write the name on the slate, and after he has waved the slate in the air for a few moments he holds it still and the name of the card is seen on it.

The card is “forced”. If the conjurer does not wish to trust to his dexterity to do this he must use a trick pack made up of about thirty-six cards all alike ; it is not necessary to have fifty-two cards. If he has been doing a trick with an ordinary pack he can easily change it for a forcing pack, by putting the ordinary pack down behind some piece of apparatus on his table and picking up the other.

The slate is decidedly “tricky”, but is different from the ordinary trick slate. A small flap is fixed with a spring hinge to the centre of the slate, and the name of the card to be used in the trick is written on the flap, which is then folded back. The slate can be shown as an ordinary slate, with nothing on it. In picking up the slate from the table the magician can easily fold

the little flap back and hold it in position with his thumb ; to cause the writing to appear he merely has to release the flap. If he will remember to keep the slate "on the move" when he is showing it to the audience the flap will not be seen.

**The Master Card.**—This is an excellent device to enable the conjurer to find a card which has been chosen and returned to the pack ; if a "master card" is used, he does not have to trouble about learning the "pass" or any other sleight of hand method of keeping track of a chosen card.

The "master card" can be made up by anyone. Take any court card, say, the King of Clubs, from a pack similar to the one which is being used, and cut away the white border. Paste the remainder of the card evenly on a similar card of the pack which you are going to use and put a weight on it till the paste is dry. You will then have a card which is slightly thicker—except at the edges—than any of the other cards in the pack.

Here is a smart little trick in which the "master card" can be used with advantage. A card is chosen and returned to the pack, which is immediately squared up ; it is quite obvious that the cards have not been manipulated in any way. The performer asks the person who

took a card to name it and then immediately cuts the pack at that card.

Put the "master card" on the top of the pack and ask someone to choose a card. While he is looking at it, slide the top half of the pack into your left hand ; the top card of that portion is the "master card". Have the chosen card replaced on the top of the "master card" and drop the rest of the pack on the top of it. Now, if you grip the pack firmly in the left hand and run your thumb down the sides you will find that you can easily find the "master card", for the pack naturally "breaks" at the thick card. Lift off the portion of the pack above the "master card" and you have cut at the chosen card.

The "master card" can be used in many tricks in which it is necessary to keep track of a chosen card.

**A Good Production Trick.**—The conjurer shows an empty bowler hat to his audience ; if his audience are little children he can even allow them to examine it. Giving the hat a little shake he shows it again to the audience, who are considerably surprised to see that it is now full of flowers. Emptying the flowers out of the hat the magician pretends to be surprised to find that there is "something else" in it. He at once

produces a quantity of silk handkerchiefs, and finishes up with the production of a large silk flag.

The secret is in the hat, which is really composed of an ordinary hat with the crown of another hat inside it. A good space is left between the inner crown and the hat proper and in this space is the load—a flag, a number of silk handkerchiefs and a packet of spring flowers. To enable the magician to get at these things a hole is cut in the inner crown, and, so that the hat can be shown to the audience, the hole is covered with the maker's label fastened on a piece of tin, to stiffen it, with a little catch to keep it in position.

Having shown the hat apparently empty, the conjurer merely has to move the label out of the way and get out the various things he is going to produce.

**A Trick with a Figure.**—A clean slate is given out for examination. When everyone is satisfied that it is an ordinary slate the illusionist wraps it in a sheet of newspaper, and gives it into the keeping of a member of the audience.

He then displays a pack of cards with numbers printed on them, and says that he is going to use one of the cards in the trick. To show that the audience have a free choice of the number he asks someone to say

which card, counting from the top of the pack, shall be used in the trick.

We will suppose that someone says : "Nineteen". The magician slowly counts out the cards till he has removed eighteen and then asks someone to take the nineteenth card and keep it for a moment ; he makes a point of impressing on the audience that he does not wish to see the card himself. When he returns to the table he picks up his magic wand and makes a few passes between the person holding the card and the person holding the slate. Then he asks the person who has the card to tell him what number is on it. The person holding the slate is asked to remove the paper, and hold the slate up so that everyone may see it. The audience see that the chosen number has been written mysteriously on the slate.

Two slates, exactly alike, are needed for the trick. One of them has the number which is going to be used written on it. Several sheets of newspaper are on the table. Having shown the clean slate, the conjurer holds it in his right hand and raises several sheets of the paper with his left hand. For a second the slate is out of sight of the audience, and in that moment he quietly leaves on the table the slate which the audience have seen and picks up the other one—with the clean side facing the audience. He then separates the top sheet

of paper from the rest and wraps up the slate with the number on it ; the other sheets hide the clean slate.

The card to be used is on the top of the pack. When a number has been chosen by the audience the performer lifts off the two top cards together as one card and counts "one". He does not put the two cards on the table, but at once goes on to take the next card under the two in his right hand. If the number "nineteen" has been chosen the magician goes on counting off the cards in this way, and as he takes the eighteenth card away he pulls the top card of those in his right hand on to the pack and asks someone to take it. Of course, it is the card that was originally at the top of the pack.

The slate trick can be done in many different ways, but worked in the way I have described it is very convincing. The slate is examined before and after the trick, and the audience appear to have a perfectly free choice of the card which is to be used. Moreover, the trick done in this way is so simple and straightforward that the youngest child in the audience can follow it ; at the same time it is extremely puzzling to adults.

**The Turban Trick.**—In this, a long piece of coloured muslin which, the illusionist says, is really an Indian turban, is used. He explains that as the Indian to whom



it belonged was a magician, his turban has certain magical properties. Picking up a pair of scissors he openly cuts the turban in two, puts the ends into the flame of a candle for a moment, extinguishes the flame with his hands, and throws out the turban—completely restored.

There are several sleight of hand methods of doing this trick, but a method which does away with sleight of hand is just as effective, far easier and, if anything, more convincing to an audience.

The turban is really only a piece of coloured muslin about four inches wide, and four or five yards long. It is rolled up and placed on the table, but before putting it there the conjurer slips over the end a “ring” of muslin (made by sewing together the ends of a short piece) slightly wider than the turban. The performer picks up the muslin, takes hold of the end and throws out the strip; his hand conceals the “ring” of muslin. He runs his hand down to the centre—secretly taking with it the “ring”—doubles the muslin in his left hand and apparently takes the loop from the top of the left hand in order to cut it; of course, he really pulls out a piece of the “ring”. Having cut through the muslin and shown the two ends he holds them in the flame of a candle, and in the act of putting out the flame with his hands pulls out the remainder of the “ring” and

hides it in his right hand. Then all he has to do is to throw out the muslin and show that it is in one piece ; in gathering it up again he can easily hide the piece which was in the hand, and can then show his hands empty.

**A Handkerchief and a Wand.**—For this mystifying trick the magician taps his wand on the table, shows a long empty envelope, and drops the wand into it. He then twists a sheet of paper into a little cone-shaped bag, picks up a silk handkerchief, drops it into the bag, and turns down the top of it. He then places the bag on his table near the envelope containing the wand. He asks the audience to remember that the handkerchief is in the bag and the wand in the envelope. Clapping his hands together, he unrolls the bag, and shows a plain sheet of paper ; the handkerchief has vanished. Breaking open the envelope he discloses the missing handkerchief, and as he goes on to screw the torn envelope up into a ball it is obvious that the wand has disappeared. He assures the audience that he slipped the wand up his sleeve and, putting his hand under his coat, takes it out.

There is no trick in the long envelope. The “wand” is really a paper cylinder with a handkerchief in the middle of it ; the ends of the cylinder are closed with

two little wooden plugs, and so it is easy to tap the wand on the table to show that it is solid.

The paper which is twisted into a bag is made of two sheets gummed together by three of their edges ; thus the sheet is really a flat paper bag. In twisting up the paper into a bag the performer holds it with the open side at the top and just before he puts the handkerchief into the bag he separates the two sheets so that the handkerchief is really hidden between them.

The wand produced at the end of the trick is an ordinary one and it is in the inside pocket of the coat. The rest of the trick does not need any explanation ; it works itself.

**A Mysterious Banana.**—Handing a bag of bananas to a member of the audience, ask that one may be taken ; the others are put back on the table. Then show some cards with numbers printed on them, and a small wooden box with a hinged lid. Someone is asked to take one of the cards and, without looking at it, to put it in the box, which the conjurer closes and hands to another member of the audience. This person is asked to come up to the performer's table. The magician, holding his wand, asks this assistant to take hold of the other end for a moment ; he then steps down to

the person holding the banana and repeats the business with the wand.

On his return to the table he suggests that it is time they discovered what number is on the card in the box. He takes the box from the assistant, opens it, and removes the card, which he holds up to the audience. Everyone can see the number—say, four. The banana is then returned, and as the peel is removed it drops into four pieces.

All the bananas in the bag are prepared for the trick. Thread a needle with a long piece of cotton and push the needle along just under the skin of the banana. As the banana is not straight the needle cannot go very far in a straight line. The illusionist pulls it out but without drawing the cotton away, and then puts the needle into the banana again, taking care to put it in the little hole from which it was withdrawn. The preparations are continued in this way until the needle is brought out at the hole in which it was first inserted. The needle is then slipped off the cotton, and if the preparations have been properly made there are now two ends of the cotton projecting from a small hole in the banana. Pulling on the two ends of the cotton cuts right through the fruit.

It is necessary, of course, to cut through the banana three times in order to cut it into four pieces. If a bag

of bananas is going to be used—and, of course, this is advisable—all the fruit must be treated in the same way. The trick can be done by merely showing one banana, but a better effect is obtained if an assistant is allowed to choose one from a bag.

The box used in the trick is known as a “card changing box”. The top and bottom of the box are alike, and are painted a dull black ; there is a loose black flap—a piece of thin wood—in the box. To prepare for the trick the performer puts a card with the figure 4 on it under the flap. The card which is chosen by a member of the audience—who must be cautioned not to look at it and to put it face downwards in the box—is really placed on the loose flap. Then all that the conjurer has to do is to turn the box over before he opens it. This action causes the card originally hidden in the box to be visible, and the card which the member of the audience put in the box to be hidden.

Another method of forcing a small figure on the audience is by means of a loaded die which, when thrown out of an ordinary dice box, always stops with the same figure uppermost. The die must be thrown out so that it moves along the table before coming to rest ; if it is merely dumped out on the table—without a proper “throw”—it may not fall in the way required by the conjurer.

**Two Handkerchiefs and an Envelope.**—The conjurer comes forward with a long envelope and two handkerchiefs in his hands. An envelope large enough to contain a sheet of typewriting paper folded once answers the purpose admirably.

Putting his fingers into the opening of the envelope he holds it up so that the audience can see that it is what he describes it to be—an empty envelope. He then fastens down the flap and rests the envelope against a candlestick on the table.

Picking up the two handkerchiefs, he rolls them between his hands, and causes them to vanish. He then opens the envelope and takes out the handkerchiefs.

The envelope is prepared for the trick. Take another envelope of the same kind and cut away the address side, leaving the flap on it. With a sharp pair of scissors shave off a little piece all round the envelope. Put the side in the ordinary envelope, which now has two flaps to it and a paper partition in the centre. Leave the compartment next to the address side empty. Place two duplicate handkerchiefs, folded up, in the other compartment of the envelope, and fasten down the tip of the flap lightly. Now, if you put your thumb on the flap which is fastened down and your fingers inside the envelope you can hold it up to the audience and they see that it is apparently empty. Having done this at

the performance, fasten down the outer flap over the other, and rest the envelope against a candlestick on the table.

To cause the two handkerchiefs to vanish the performer makes use of what is known as a handkerchief "vanisher", which is a little pear-shaped cup with a piece of strong cord elastic attached to it. The "vanisher" can be made of celluloid, or tin, or wood; one can be procured at any shop where conjuring tricks are sold. The elastic is fastened to the thin end of the "vanisher", and the free end of the elastic is tied into a loop.

To set the "vanisher" for the trick, put the free end of the elastic through one of the loops of your braces (at the back) and pull on it until the "vanisher" rests against the trousers. Then pass the elastic right round the body, bring it to the front, and fasten it to a trousers button. You will then find that you can pull on the "vanisher" and lodge it at the top of the right hand trousers pocket; it is held securely there.

Pick up the two handkerchiefs with your left hand and, apparently accidentally, drop one on the floor. As you pick it up your left side should be towards the audience; in stooping down you can easily get hold of the "vanisher" by putting two fingers in it. Bring it out and swing round, facing the audience. Your arm hides the elastic. Gently wave the hands up and down

while you secretly stuff the handkerchiefs into the "vanisher". When the handkerchiefs are well home, release the "vanisher" slowly, and the elastic will carry it noiselessly out of sight.

Then all you have to do is to go to the envelope, open it by lifting both flaps at once—an easy matter because they are now stuck together—and take out the two handkerchiefs.

**Released !**—Someone ties your two wrists together with a handkerchief, the end of a long cord is dropped behind the bandage, and someone pulls on the two ends—which should be level—till the cord is close to the bandage round your wrists.

Point out to the audience that as long as the two ends of the cord are being held it is impossible for you to get away. Then you make two or three quick movements of the hands—to prevent the audience from seeing exactly what you are doing—and the cord drops to the floor. You are free.

This very effective trick is quite simple when you know the secret ! Stand with your left side to the audience. When the cord is close against the handkerchief bend the fingers of the right hand down until you can get hold of the cord. Pull it up—it may be necessary



to take a step towards your assistant while you are doing this—and put your right hand through the loop. Then, with a quick upward movement of your wrists you will find that you can free yourself.

Practise the trick, before showing it, by tying a short length of cord to a chair.

**Knots that Untie Themselves.**—It is easy to mystify your audience with this trick. Invite someone to tie half a dozen silk handkerchiefs together, by their corners, in a string. Then show an empty bag—by turning it inside out and back again—and put the handkerchiefs into the bag. Picking up his magic wand the conjurer stirs up the handkerchiefs, dips his hand into the bag, and takes out the handkerchiefs separately. The knots have disappeared.

This can be done, without the bag, by sleight of hand, but in that form it is by no means easy, and so I give the simplified version.

The bag is known as a “changing bag”. The size will depend, of course, on the size of the handkerchiefs used, but a good useful size is nine inches by twelve. The bag, which should be made of soft silk, has a partition of the same material running down the centre,

and thus the bag is divided into two compartments. Before the conjurer begins the performance, he puts half a dozen silk handkerchiefs into one of the compartments of the bag, and then turns the top edge down for about an inch all the way round. Then the conjurer can show that the bag is empty by turning it inside out for a moment and then back again.

To do the trick all that is necessary is to put the knotted handkerchiefs into the bag and, in the act of stirring them with the wand, bring the partition over to the other side of the bag. This action hides the knotted handkerchiefs and allows the conjurer to take the others from the bag, which can then be shown empty again.

**A Handkerchief and a Candle.**—This trick is similar to that done with a handkerchief and a wand. On the magician's table is a lighted candle. The conjurer blows out the flame and wraps the candle in a piece of tissue paper. He then puts a small handkerchief in a paper bag. Pronouncing the "magic word", he unrolls the paper and thus shows that the handkerchief has vanished. He picks up the paper parcel, tears it in half, and discloses the handkerchief. To conclude he takes the candle from his pocket.

Directions for making the paper bag for vanishing a handkerchief have been given. The candle which the audience see in the first place is a tube of stiff white paper with a little piece of candle at the top ; of course, a duplicate handkerchief is in the paper tube, and a real candle is in the coat pocket.

**A Trick with a Dozen Bangles.**—All the articles used in this trick can be freely examined by the audience ; they are a dozen bangles made of celluloid—or silver, if one wishes to be extravagant—a long piece of cord, and a large handkerchief with a hole in the centre.

After the things have been examined the illusionist takes the cord and asks for one of the bangles ; the audience have a free choice. Folding the cord in two the conjurer puts the loop through the bangle, and then the ends through the loop, and drawing up the ends shows that the bangle is firmly secured to the cord. The ends of the cord are next passed through all the other bangles, and when the two ends are held the bangles naturally fall down on the top of the single bangle secured by the loop.

The two ends of the cord are then passed through the hole in the handkerchief, which is passed down the

cord until it hides the bangles. The magician invites a member of the audience to hold the ends of the cord. Then, putting his hand under the handkerchief, he removes the bangles, and when the handkerchief is removed the audience see that the single bangle is still in its place.

The trick is really very easy. When the performer's hands are hidden by the handkerchief, he pulls on the loop close to the single bangle until he is able to pass it right over the bangle, which then comes away from the cord. The performer prevents the other bangles from falling to the floor and places them on his little finger for a moment while he puts the single bangle back in its place. To do this he puts the bangle on the loop and spreads the loop out so that he can pass it right over the bangle, which is thus on the cord again.

**A Cardboard Tube and a Handkerchief.**—To Mr. Will Goldston, the founder of the Magicians Club, I am indebted for the details of this puzzling little trick.

The illusionist holds up a small cardboard tube, so that the audience can see right through it ; to convince the audience that there is nothing in the tube he drops his wand through it. Near one end of the tube are two

holes opposite each other ; it is explained that the holes are there so that the magic wand can be put through them and thus suspend the tube. The wand, with the tube hanging on it, is laid on the top of a candlestick.

The magician then causes a silk handkerchief to vanish. He takes the tube from the wand and, showing that there is nothing concealed in his hand, puts one finger and a thumb into the tube and draws out the handkerchief.

The novel part of the trick is really in the tube, which is a very ingenious piece of apparatus. A long pocket of stiff paper is pasted on the outside of the tube ; the top of the pocket is level with one of the holes in the tube. A duplicate handkerchief is pushed down into the pocket and, to enable the conjurer to get hold of it, a small bead is fastened to the corner of the handkerchief and is pulled out close to the hole in the tube. Thus, to get the handkerchief out all that the conjurer has to do is to feel for the bead and pull on it. The handkerchief appears to come out of the tube—and, of course, it does come out of the end above the holes in the tube—but it really comes out of the pocket outside the tube.



**A Ring of Ribbon and a Wand.**—The conjurer, showing his hands empty, picks up his wand and throws a handkerchief over it, but without hiding the ends. Two members of the audience are asked to hold the ends of the wand. The magician next takes from his pocket a small ring of ribbon and, having shown it to the two assistants, holds it under the handkerchief and, therefore, close to the wand. He asks his assistants to be sure not to let go of the ends of the wand; he then snatches the handkerchief away and the audience see the ring of ribbon on the wand, although the ends have been held by the assistants.

The wand has two metal caps to it. One of the caps is not fastened to the wood but merely fits tightly on the stick. This cap has a small metal rod soldered inside it, and the other end of the rod fits into a hole in the stick. A duplicate ring of ribbon is concealed in the faked cap of the wand before the start of the trick, and the cap is then pushed on the wand. When the handkerchief is thrown over the wand the cap is pulled out and the ribbon drawn on to the wand; then the cap is pushed back into its place.

When the performer holds the ring under the handkerchief he merely folds it and drops it down his sleeve.



**The Card that Changes Colour.**—This is a brilliant little trick, but it needs practice. The illusionist asks someone to “take a card”. We will suppose that the card is the five of clubs. The conjurer takes the card from the person who chose it and holds it up so that all can see it. Then he suggests that the five of clubs is rather a dismal sort of card, all black, and he walks down to the audience and holds it for a moment against any red article—a lady’s dress or scarf—or the red cheek of a small boy, if one is present. Holding up the card he shows that the pips are now red.

The rest of the trick is performed very briskly. The magician holds the article to a blue dress and shows that the pips have been changed to blue and then he changes them in the same way to yellow. Finally he holds the card to his face for a moment and shows that it has been changed to a photograph of himself which he asks the person who chose the card to accept as a little souvenir. When the person takes the card he is surprised to find that it is a blank card; it is then explained that the whole trick is an optical illusion; there never has been anything on the card.

The necessary coloured cards, the photograph, and the blank card are on the top of the pack; the rest of the pack is a forcing one; there are about three dozen cards all alike. After a card has been selected the

conjurer takes it back and holds it up between the tips of his second and first fingers. The rest of the pack he holds in his left hand. In going down to hold the card, against a red object the performer swings his hands in one direction—from the right to the left of him—and changes the card for the one on the top of the pack—a red five of clubs. To do this the performer puts the real five of clubs at the bottom of the pack (the left fingers quickly seizing it and pulling it out of the way), and takes the top card, which the thumb of the left hand pushed over the edge of the pack in readiness for the change, between his right thumb and first finger.

The card is then shifted till it is held between the tips of the first and second fingers, in readiness for the next change. And that is all there is to it. The beginner should practise making the change in front of a looking-glass and should go on till he is able to deceive himself—or very nearly! The great thing to remember is to keep the hands moving while the change is being made; directly it is made the left hand moves well away from the other. The right hand must not go up to the pack and come away from it in the opposite direction; after the change is made the right hand is almost stationary.





**Magnetic Cards.**—Passing the pack to the audience, the illusionist asks that about a dozen cards may be taken from it and handed to him ; it is not necessary for the person handling the cards to remember the twelve selected ones. The performer puts one of the twelve cards on the outstretched palm of his right hand, and arranges the others under it in the form of a star. Then he places his left hand on the cards and turns his right hand over, the left hand keeping the cards pressed against the palm for a moment. The performer explains that there is not much trick in doing that ; the trick starts when you do this—and he takes his left hand away, but the cards remain close to the right hand, which is now above them, of course. Finally the right hand is turned over again and the cards are handed down to the audience—just to convince everyone that the cards are not specially prepared for the trick.

The secret consists of a loop of fine hair, which the conjurer takes from his pocket when he is returning to his table and slips over his right hand. The first card is put under the loop, and the others are arranged in the form of a star under it. At the conclusion of the trick the performer breaks the hair and lets it drop on the floor ; no-one ever notices it.



**A Trick with a Lighted Cigarette.**—The magician comes on smoking a cigarette, which he takes from his mouth and causes to vanish; the hands are shown empty. Then he puts his hand into his trousers pocket and takes out a lighted cigarette and continues his smoke.

The first part of the trick is done by means of a cigarette “vanisher”, which is a little cone-shaped metal tube with a long pin fixed in it. This is fastened to a piece of cord elastic in the coat sleeve, the length of the elastic being so adjusted that the “vanisher” flies up the sleeve directly it is released from the hand. The lighted end of the cigarette goes into the “vanisher” and is jammed in: the action puts out the fire. The long pin also assists in holding the cigarette securely.

A duplicate cigarette is in a little “tank” in the trousers pocket.

**The Captive Smoke.**—This makes a good “follow” to the preceding trick. The conjurer, continuing to smoke his cigarette, shows a small glass jar with a lid; he puts on the lid and covers the glass with a handkerchief. As he is smoking he clutches at the smoke and pretends to throw it in the direction of the glass. The movements are repeated a few times and then the

conjurer takes the handkerchief from the glass and lifts off the lid. The audience see the glass full of smoke.

The glass jar is prepared by being painted inside with a little spirits of salts (highly poisonous). About twelve drops are sufficient and they should be applied with a feather. With another feather paint the inside of the lid with about twelve drops of ammonia. When the two chemicals are combined they give off a little smoke.

**Producing a Silk Handkerchief.**—When about to do a trick with a silk handkerchief the magician can add considerably to the effect by producing the handkerchief magically. The following method is easy. Spread the handkerchief on the table and fold the corners to the middle; hold the corners there and repeat the movement with the four remaining corners. Continue until the handkerchief is in a very small parcel. Put the parcel on the left sleeve—at the elbow joint—conceal the handkerchief by pulling a fold of the sleeve over it. Hold it in position by slightly bending the arm.

Come forward to present your trick and show that your hands are empty. Pull up your sleeves a little way by putting the right hand on the left sleeve and the

left hand on the right ; in that first movement you get hold of the handkerchief. Then put your two hands together and cause the handkerchief to appear slowly.

**The Rising Cards.**—If the reader will turn to the description of the “Master Card” he will have no difficulty in doing the first part of this trick, which consists of having three cards chosen and returned to the pack brought, unknown to the audience, to the top of the pack.

Having done that the illusionist says that he needs a little electricity for the trick. Extending the first finger (and no others) of his right hand the performer rubs it on the sleeve of his coat and holds it over the cards. Nothing happens. He rubs the finger again and this time, when he holds the finger over the cards, one of them—which, of course, is one of the chosen cards—rises from the pack. He continues the movements and makes the next two cards rise.

Before the trick begins the conjurer moistens the tip of his little finger. When he wishes a card to rise he holds his first finger over the pack and, unknown to the audience, extends his little finger, pressing it on the back of the top card ; by raising the hand the

card is made to rise. To the audience the card appears to be following the first finger raised above it. When about three-parts of the card are above the pack the little finger is bent in again and the thumb and first finger take the card away.

There are almost as many ways of doing this trick as there are conjurers, but the above method is one of the best, for the simple reason that the trick, in this form, can be done anywhere without any previous preparation and without any kind of "fake".

**The Handkerchief in the Decanter.**—This makes a good opening trick for a performance. The conjurer shows an empty decanter and covers it with a large handkerchief. He then picks up a silk handkerchief and causes it to vanish. Whisking the cover from the decanter he shows that the vanished handkerchief has found its way inside the decanter, which it fills.

I have already explained how to make a handkerchief vanish. The one which is seen in the decanter at the close of the trick is hidden, in the first place, in the neck of the decanter, which is naturally grasped by the hand. In covering the decanter with the large handkerchief the performer pushes the other one inside with his thumb.

**The Diviner.**—Three cards are selected by members of the audience and returned to the pack, which is then thoroughly shuffled. The illusionist spreads out the pack on his table and asks someone to blindfold him by tying a handkerchief round his head. To convince the audience that he cannot possibly see any of the cards on the table, he spreads a newspaper over them. He then takes from his pocket three small penknives. He holds one of the knives in his right hand over the newspaper and hesitates for a few moments, pretending to be a little uncertain about the thing he is going to try to do. Then he suddenly jabs the knife down on the paper and leaves it sticking up there. He does the same thing with the other two knives and the audience see the knives firmly fixed into position.

Members of the audience are next asked to name their cards. Throwing off his bandage the magician tears the paper away from the knives and then picks each one up separately. Naturally, each knife has been stuck into a card, and when he holds up the knives with the cards sticking on their points he shows the audience that the three cards are those which were selected.

The first thing required for this trick is a forcing pack of three cards. Sets of three cards are repeated about a dozen times, and all the sets are in the same order,

For example, suppose the set consists of the King of hearts, the three of clubs and the nine of diamonds, in that order ; then all the other sets must be in that order too ; if any one set had the nine of diamonds on the top, followed by the King of hearts and the three of clubs, there would be a risk of the trick being upset. It is very necessary to remember this and to see, before the trick begins, that the forcing pack is in right order. One can easily make up a pack of this kind by buying a dozen packs of cards with backs all alike, but it is more economical to buy a forcing pack from a shop where tricks are sold.

The conjurer also requires an ordinary pack of cards with backs similar to those of the trick pack, two sheets of newspaper exactly alike, and three small knives.

To prepare for the trick the performer spreads one sheet of paper on the table and lays three cards from the ordinary pack upon it ; these three cards must be similar to those of the forcing pack. The cards should be a few inches apart and it is advisable to lay each one on a column of the paper. The magician then cuts from the other paper three pieces of paper large enough to cover the three cards ; he should cut out three pieces similar to those which are hidden by the cards. These pieces of paper are pasted by their edges over the three cards. Thus, when the performer holds the paper

up and casually shows both sides of it the audience do not notice that it has been prepared in any way for the trick.

To perform the trick the conjurer puts the ordinary pack (minus the three cards which have been fixed to the newspaper) in his right-hand waistcoat pocket, and he comes forward with the forcing pack in his hands. If he has been doing some tricks with an ordinary pack so much the better ; by having the forcing pack hidden behind some piece of apparatus on one of his tables he can easily change the ordinary pack he has been using for it.

He asks someone to cut the cards. When this has been done he takes the top portion away from the person assisting him and turns it towards him so that no-one shall see the bottom card. He then asks his assistant to take the next three cards, and, when his back is turned, hold them up so that everyone may see them.

Now, if the learner will experiment for a moment with a forcing pack of cards he will see that no matter where it is cut the three cards below the portion which is removed by the cut must be the three cards of which the pack is composed.

When the assistant takes the three cards the conjurer has all the rest of the forcing pack in his possession.



He turns round for a moment while the three cards are being held up to the audience and, unknown to the audience, he drops the forcing pack into the inside pocket of his coat and takes the ordinary pack from his waistcoat pocket. Then the performer swings round and has the three cards returned to the pack ; of course, anyone may shuffle the pack till he—or she—is tired.

The rest of the trick is simple. Although the performer is blindfolded he can see any object directly beneath him ; he sees “down his nose”. In showing the newspaper he does not hold it with the faked side to the audience for longer than a second or two and he keeps it moving all the time. The paper is placed down with the prepared side next to the table. Naturally, the performer knows the exact positions of the three cards, for it is an easy matter to remember the heading of an article, or a piece of an advertisement, or a picture. The reader will now understand why a newspaper is used.

The magician makes a great show of pretending to be uncertain as to the spot he is going to stab, for it would not do to let the audience see how easy this part of the trick is. If the reader will follow the rest of the directions he cannot fail with the trick.

**The Spelling Bee.**—The illusionist asks three members of his audience to take four cards apiece; each of those assistants is asked to think of one of the three cards in his—or her—possession. The conjurer impresses on the audience that the assistants can please themselves as to what cards they decide to think of.

He then goes to one of the three persons holding cards and, cutting the pack, says: "Please put the card of which you are thinking there," and he holds out the lower portion of the pack. "Now," he adds, "please drop the other cards you have on the top of it." He next openly puts the upper portion of the pack—which he has been holding in his right hand—on top of the cards returned by the assistant.

The same proceeding is gone through with the other two persons holding cards. The pack is then shuffled and the conjurer asks the last person to name the card of which he is thinking. We will suppose that it is the six of hearts. The performer takes off the top card and says "S"; he deals the second, and says "I", and with the third he says "X". Then he holds up the next card and shows that it is the six of hearts—the very card of which the person chose to think.

The other two cards are revealed in the same way. The magician counts down the value of the card—the suit is ignored.

The reader who has learned the use of the "Master Card", already explained, will have no difficulty with this trick. Each person holds four cards, it will be remembered, and each person is asked to put the card thought of on the top of the lower portion of the pack when it is being cut by the performer.

There is no difficulty in cutting the pack at the "Master Card", but instead of leaving it on the top of the lower portion of the pack the conjurer should remember to include it with the top portion ; of course, it will be the bottom card of those he holds in his right hand.

A moment's thought will show the reader that when all the cards have been returned to the pack, and it has been squared up, the performer has only to cut the pack again at the "Master Card" and shuffle that portion in front of the other (with the faces of the cards to the audience) and he leaves the three sets of cards which have been used at the top of the pack. Each card which the three members of the audience are thinking of is the fourth card down. If the last person to return cards is thinking of an ace, or a two, or a six, or a ten, he merely deals off three cards in the way described and holds up the next—which is bound to be the right card. If the person is thinking of one of these cards—four, five, nine, Jack, King—

the magician spells out the four letters and then turns the card he is holding to the audience, who see that it is the chosen card. If the card happens to be one with five letters in it he spells out the first three letters and keeps the three cards in his hand ; on going to take the fourth card he pulls one of the cards he is holding in his right hand on to the top of the pack. The left thumb can easily do that little job. Then he can turn up the right card although it has five letters.

After he has dealt with the first person he should hold the card of which that person was thinking in his hand for a moment while he asks the next person to name his card. If that card has five letters in it the conjurer can quietly drop the card he is holding on the top of the pack, and so make things easy for himself.

The trick is quite easy, but the performer must keep his wits about him.

**Two Handkerchiefs and a Tea-Caddy.**—A member of the audience is invited to hold a handkerchief by one corner in his right hand ; another in the same way in his left hand, and to tie the two handkerchiefs together. The conjurer takes the two handkerchiefs and puts them in a little tea-caddy on his table and puts the lid on it.

He then causes a handkerchief to vanish. Holding up the tea-caddy, he removes the lid, and takes out the three handkerchiefs tied together, for the one which vanished has mysteriously tied itself in between the two handkerchiefs.

The main secret is in the tea-caddy which is really composed of the top halves of two caddies joined at the base; a metal "sleeve" reaching up to the neck of the caddy hides the lower half. Into the lower portion the magician places three handkerchiefs tied together. In returning to his table, after the two handkerchiefs have been openly placed in the caddy, he has merely to turn the apparatus upside down before putting it on the table. Then the "sleeve" slides down, hiding the part which was originally at the top and disclosing the part which was originally at the bottom.

The directions for causing a handkerchief to vanish have already been given.

**Second Sight.**—This is a splendid trick for a platform or stage. If it is to be performed on a platform there should be screens at the sides; if the performance is to be given on a stage the wings take the place of screens.

An assistant hands about a dozen slips of paper to as many members of the audience, and the illusionist asks each person holding a paper to write down any question that he—or she—may wish to have answered.

The assistant collects the papers in a bag, brings them back to the magician's table, places them on an ash-tray, and sets fire to them.

The conjurer walks up and down the platform with his hand to his forehead, apparently in deep thought. He suddenly stops and says: "Someone wishes to know what horse is going to win the Derby? Is that right?" The person who wrote the question holds up his hand and admits that he wrote it. The magician then replies in any way he likes. An obvious reply would be: "If I knew for certain what horse was going to win I should have to charge you very heavily for the information, but, of course, that question has no answer."

He deals with the remainder of the questions in the same way.

Although this is a very puzzling trick to any audience, the secret is quite simple.

The assistant uses a changing bag. (Directions for using one have already been given.) In one compartment of the bag are a dozen slips of paper folded up.

Having collected the slips on which members of the audience have written questions the assistant brings the partition in the bag over and in emptying the bag turns out the dozen slips which were hidden there in the first place. It is these that are destroyed. Thus the assistant is able to walk off with the questions in his possession.

On getting out of sight of the audience the assistant quickly reads one of the slips and writes out the question in large letters on a blackboard which is in the wings or, if the performance is being given on a platform, behind a screen. The magician fills in a little time by pattering to the audience ; of course, when he is walking about the stage with his hand to his forehead he is secretly reading the question on the blackboard. He can see it easily, but it is hidden from the audience.

In order that the experiment may be presented briskly it is as well to have two blackboards and a second assistant behind the scenes. Then directly one question has been dealt with it is easy to proceed straight to another one.

**Wine and Water.**—A jug of water and four glasses, arranged in a row, are on a tray on the performer's table. The conjurer pours a little water into No. 1

glass. When he pours a little into No. 2 glass it turns into red wine. Water poured into No. 3 is plain water, but poured into glass No. 4 it again turns into wine.

The magician mixes the contents of No. 1 and No. 2 glasses together and the liquid is red. When poured into the water left in the jug that turns red. When the contents of No. 3 and No. 4 glasses are mixed together the result is clear water and this, poured into the "wine" in the jug, turns it into water. The trick ends, as it began, with a jug of clear water and four empty glasses.

This, of course, is a chemical trick. A teaspoonful of liquor potassae is placed in the water in the jug; this does not alter its appearance. Three drops of phenol pthaleine (dissolved in alcohol) are placed in glass No. 2. Glass No. 3 contains a little tartaric acid, in powder form—about as much as will cover a shilling. Glass No. 4 has three drops of phenol pthaleine in it.

When these preparations are made the conjurer can go ahead. The trick works itself.



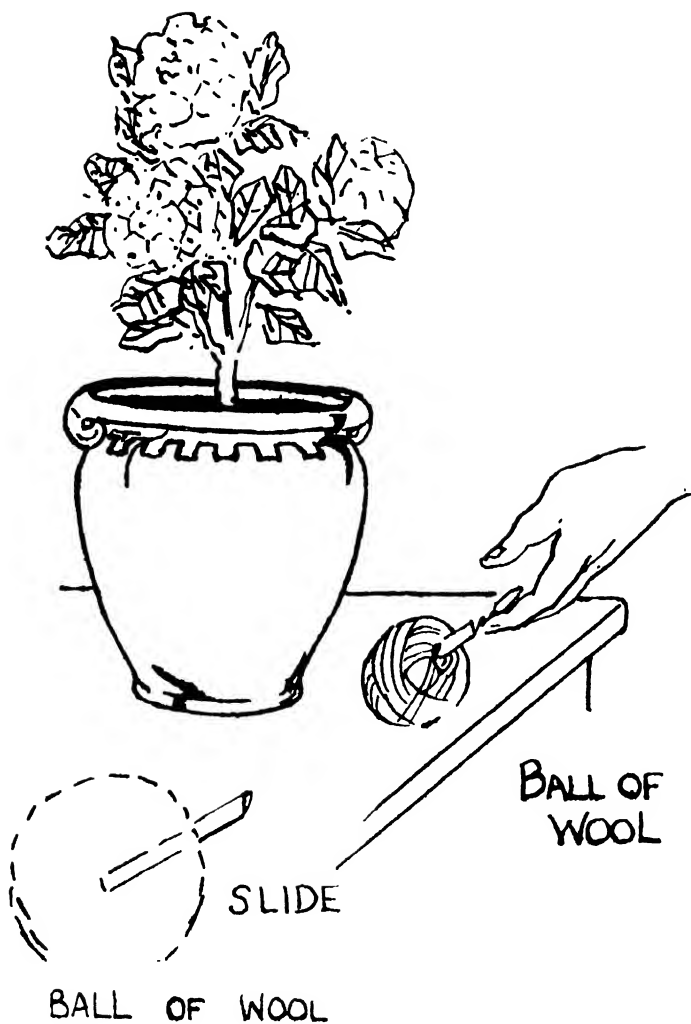


**The Mysterious Shilling.**—A really good trick is that in which a marked shilling, handed to the conjurer by a member of his audience, is immediately afterwards found inside a ball of wool, the ball having to be completely unwound to recover the shilling. Not many people can see how this is done without being told.

The fact is that the shilling is pushed into the centre of the ball of wool by means of a flat tube of cardboard or metal (which can easily be made at home). When you are preparing the trick you simply wrap the wool round the tube, the end of which should protrude a little. When you have collected the shilling, return to the table from which you are performing your tricks, and secretly drop the shilling into the tube, pull the tube out, place it in your pocket, and then show the ball of wool to the audience.

A flower-pot or something of the kind will be found useful to conceal the ball of wool on the table before you are ready to produce it. You will find that the trick works excellently, and gives no trouble. You can make the tube, which, of course, should be big enough to allow a shilling to pass through it, out of tin without much difficulty. The trick can also be done with a ball of string.







**A Good Prophet.**—This smart trick goes well. The conjurer makes two little heaps of cards and writes something on a piece of paper which he folds and asks someone to keep for a moment.

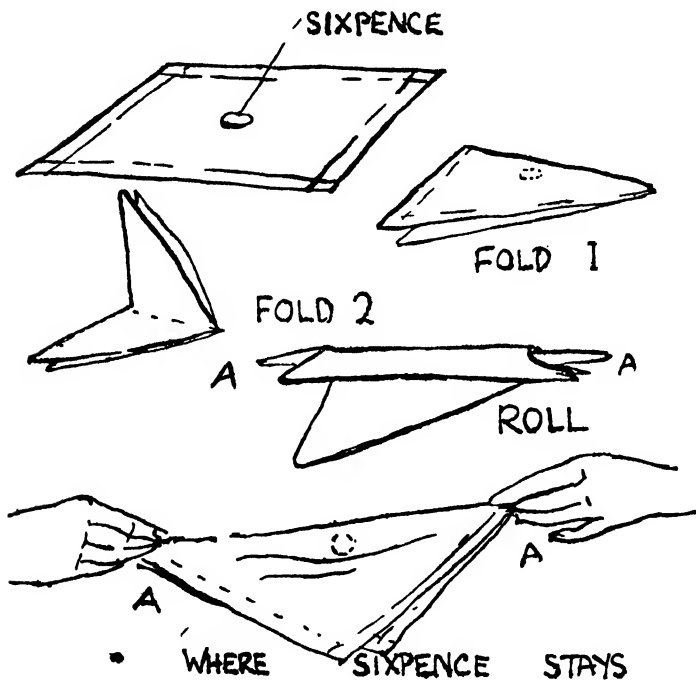
Another member of the audience is asked to point to either heap of cards. The person holding the paper is asked to read what is on it. This is: "You will choose the seven heap." The magician turns the cards of the chosen heap over, and shows that the four sevens are there.

Although the secret is quite simple the trick is very puzzling. One heap consists of four cards—the sevens of the pack; the other heap is made up of seven cards. Therefore it does not matter which heap has been chosen; the conjurer interprets his prophecy in the way that suits him, but it is just as well not to let either of the assistants examine the heap which has not been selected; they might "tumble" to the secret.

**The Vanishing Sixpence.**—Another coin trick, with a sixpence, is one from which I get a good deal of fun. A handkerchief also is required for this trick.

Place the sixpence in the centre of the handkerchief and then fold the handkerchief, bringing the bottom

right-hand corner to the bottom left-hand corner. Now bring the top right-hand corner of the handkerchief to the bottom left-hand corner. Next bring the corner of the handkerchief which is now at the top over



to the left-hand corner. There are now three folds in the handkerchief. Take the middle one with your right hand, and the bottom with your left, and sharply pull your hands apart. Everyone expects the sixpence to fall out, but it does not do so.

Some members of your audience will think that it has flown up your sleeve, or that it is in your hands. This is not the case. If the handkerchief has been properly folded the sixpence will remain in its original place in the centre of it. You must keep the handkerchief taut.

**Disappearing Tumbler of Wine.**—*Effect.*—The conjurer pours some wine from a bottle into a claret tumbler. He covers the tumbler with a handkerchief and holds it up for a moment. Then he suddenly flicks away the handkerchief; the tumbler of wine has vanished.

*Explanation.*—The base of the bottle is removed and is fixed in about half-way up the bottle. Thus there is a compartment at the top of the bottle which will hold wine, but the lower part of the bottle is hollow.

Having poured out a little wine, the conjurer, still holding the bottle in his right hand, picks up a handkerchief with his left hand, and, with both hands, displays it to the audience. The handkerchief is really a double one with a disc of cardboard, of the same size as the top of the tumbler, sewn into the centre. The handkerchief is placed over the glass, and in doing this

the conjurer takes care to get the disc exactly over the top of the glass. Then he picks up the covered tumbler (really only the handkerchief) with his left hand and at the same time puts the bottle down on the table. The bottle must come down on the table before the edges of the handkerchief are clear of the table. Of course, the bottle is really put down over the tumbler, and the conjurer, holding the handkerchief in his hand, pauses for a moment, and then flicks away the handkerchief. The inventor of this excellent little trick is Mr. Elbert M. Morey.

**Cut String Restored.**—The illusionist hands a piece of string and a yard measure to a member of the audience, and the string is seen to be exactly one yard in length. The performer, showing his hands empty, asks that the string may be folded exactly in half and handed back to him. He cuts the loop and asks two members of the audience to hold the two ends hanging down; the conjurer's closed hand holds the other two ends together. The hand is then opened, and the string is seen to be joined; the person who measured it in the first place is asked to measure it again. The length has not varied.

A small loop of string is concealed by the magician at the beginning of the trick between the first and second

fingers of the left hand ; the fingers completely hide the loop, and, therefore, the hands can be shown empty ; with the fingers curved slightly the hands will then be in a natural position.

On receiving the folded string from the person assisting him the conjurer takes it in the left hand and in apparently pulling up the loop to the top of his hand really pulls up the concealed loop. Having cut through this loop, the performer at once passes his closed hand over the cut ends while he asks two members of the audience to hold the ends which are hanging down. In directing his assistants how to hold the string, he removes his right hand, thus palming away the two little pieces of string, and at once puts his left hand over the same place ; thus, when the left hand is slowly opened and the string is seen restored the audience can see that the conjurer has nothing concealed in his hand. The two ends are dropped into a side pocket of the coat.

**The Watch and the Loaf.**—A watch is borrowed from a member of the audience. The magician wraps a handkerchief round the watch, and gives it to someone to hold, with the request that it may be held tightly in the handkerchief. Taking hold of one corner of



the handkerchief, the conjurer whisks it out of the hand of the spectator. The watch has vanished.

The attention of the audience is then directed to a large paper parcel which has been standing on a side table. The performer carefully cuts the string from the parcel and pulls off the paper, only to disclose another paper covering. This is removed, but there are several others under it ; they are removed singly and, eventually, the conjurer holds up the contents of the parcel—a large loaf. He cuts the loaf in halves and discloses the missing watch in the centre.

The handkerchief is a double one, and it has a dummy watch sewn into one corner. In covering the borrowed watch with the handkerchief, the conjurer palms the borrowed watch and gives the dummy, sewn into the handkerchief, to the spectator to hold ; he, of course, believes he is holding the borrowed watch.

The performer, in picking up the parcel, manages to force the watch into the centre of the loaf, which is new and soft. The papers do not quite meet under the bottom of the parcel, and therefore the conjurer is able to push the watch into the loaf by inserting it into the little gap between the edges of the papers.



**Broken Cotton.**—About six feet of cotton is unwound from a spool by the magician who, giving one end to a spectator, requests him to break it up into little pieces. The magician takes the pieces, screws them into a little ball, and hands it to the spectator; in doing this he allows the spectator to see that his hands are empty. Having satisfied his assistant on this point, the magician takes the little ball of pieces again, draws out an end, and hands the ball to the assistant, who is then requested to pull it slowly out of the magician's hand.

This request is obeyed, and the spectator is surprised to find that instead of drawing out one short piece of cotton all the pieces are joined together again.

This is effected by handing the spectator the pieces bunched up with an extra piece, which the performer previously concealed in his hand. The performer is thus able to show that his hands are empty and that there is apparently no "extra piece" of cotton.

Before commencing this trick the performer winds about twelve feet of cotton, having previously tied a knot in the middle of it, round a little piece of stick. Thus, when he casually unwinds the cotton in order to show the trick, he knows that he can go on unwinding it until he reaches the knot. He breaks the cotton just above the knot, thereby leaving the end with the knot on it in his hand. The piece broken off is given to a

spectator with the request that he will break it into several small pieces ; while he is thus engaged the performer slips the little piece of stick out of the rest of the cotton and puts the stick into his pocket. The whole piece of cotton with the knot on the end is now in a position to be "palmed".

The magician takes the pieces from the spectator, rolls them up into a little ball, and adds to it the whole piece which he had concealed in his hand, to be able to show his hands empty. In taking back the ball of cotton, the conjurer merely has to find the end with the knot on it ; he holds this himself, and gives the remainder of the little coil to the spectator with the request that he will pull on it slowly. While he is doing this, the magician quietly tucks the ball of broken pieces into the fork of his thumb, where they can easily be concealed. When the spectator has pulled out the whole piece the conjurer can show once more that his hands are not holding the broken pieces. In gathering up the whole piece again the performer can include the ball of broken pieces.

**The Ring on the Cord.**—There is nothing to lead the audience to believe that two pieces of string shown

by the conjurer are held in an unusual way, but, as a matter of fact, one of the pieces has a ring threaded on it, and the ring is palmed. The other piece, folded in half, is held between the first finger and thumb with the two ends projecting upwards. A wedding ring—a duplicate of the one palmed—is passed over the end of the string above the thumb and first finger and someone is asked to tie a knot. The performer covers the knot with his other hand, and after a little manipulation shows the string with the ring on it, but the knot has disappeared.

When the magician covered the tied-up ring with his hand, he also secured from his sleeve a spring hook attached to an elastic pull in his sleeve. He then snapped the hook on the loop of string on which the ring was threaded and released the hook, which carried the ring and loop up his sleeve. In due course the other string is shown with the ring on it, and this convinces the audience that the knot which fastened the two pieces of string together has, in some “magical” way, been dissolved.

**The Mysterious Coins.**—The necessary preparations for this trick are made in full view of the audience.

Two pieces of string, knotted together in three places, are first shown. Then the conjurer produces a number of Chinese coins, or English coins that have been defaced by having a hole made in them; these too can be examined. Seven of the coins are passed on to one end of the double string and six coins on the other, and anyone in the audience may assist in doing this. Two more of the examined coins are tied on to the ends of the string, and the knots are sealed.

The performer takes the string in the centre and holds the centre coin, leaving six coins on either side supported by the two coins that have been tied and sealed on the string. It is obvious, therefore, that the six coins on either side cannot pass the tied coins.

A large dark handkerchief with a hole cut in the centre is now thrown over the coins and string, and the performer passes the centre coin through a hole in the handkerchief and slips a buttonhook into the hole in the coin. He hands the buttonhook to someone in the audience.

Next, he puts his hand under the handkerchief and removes all twelve coins, leaving the centre coin still held by a member of the audience and the two coins on the end of the string.

Actually, one of the lower knots in the string is a fake. This end is really a short loop of string fastened

to the other. When this knot is pulled tightly, it looks just like a real knot. If the string is fairly stiff, the magician will have no difficulty in unfastening the fake knot at the right time under cover of the handkerchief.

The preliminary preparations for the trick are all fairly made, but a little deception is practised by the performer when he covers the string and apparently pushes up the centre coin through the hole in the handkerchief. Shielded by the handkerchief, he secretly pushes six coins from one end on to the top of the six coins on the other end, but before he does this he holds the centre coin and so makes people believe that it is this coin which he passes through the hole in the handkerchief. The real coin which is passed through the handkerchief is the lowest one of the stack. Thus twelve coins are all on the faked end of the string.

The performer merely unfastens the knot, allows the coins to rest in his hand, and quickly fastens the loop of string on the main piece again. He then produces all twelve coins, making a show of drawing them off both ends of the string.

The audience are always so intent on examining the coins that they never give a thought to the string, and even if they were to do so it is extremely unlikely that they would discover the secret of the trick.

**Ring and String.**—A piece of string, about a yard and a half long, is tied tightly round the wrists of the magician. He borrows a ring, turns round for a moment, and shows that he has managed to get the ring on the string and to tie it there, although the two ends of the string are still tied tightly round his wrists. This is how it is done. The performer takes up a loop in the centre of the string and pushes it through the ring, he then passes the loop under the string tied round his left wrist, over the hand, through the string again on the other side of the wrist, and then over the hand again. The ring is then tied on the string.

**The Magic Knot.**—Twisting a handkerchief into a rope and, holding one corner, the performer snaps the other in the air, but no knot appears. This is merely preliminary play. He quickly gathers the loose end into his hand, shakes one end free, and the knot is at the extreme end of it, although the fingers have apparently played no part in the trick at all.

The secret is the tying of a one-handed knot in the end of the handkerchief when first shaking it out and keeping the knot concealed in the hand. The twisted handkerchief is passed over the little and third fingers,

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under the first and second, and so round into the hand. The thumb pushes the end round until it can be clipped between the first and second fingers. Then the handkerchief is slipped off the hand and the knot is tied. This is done quickly, but the knot is kept concealed in the hand. The other hand gathers up the free end and the right hand then holds both ends. The conjurer in shaking out the handkerchief for the second time merely releases the end with the knot in it.





## **POCKET TRICKS**



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**The Magnetic Penny.**—This is a good trick to do after dinner; you will see why presently. The conjurer throws a penny on the table and gives someone three cardboard covers to look at; the covers are merely the lids of pill-boxes. The performer arranges the covers in a row and slips the penny under one of them. He points out that the coin can be concealed by any one of the three covers and he invites someone to put it under one of them when his back is turned. Directly he turns round again he touches the three covers with his first finger and pretends to get an electric shock from one of them. Then he announces that the penny is under that cover and—it is! The trick can be repeated, but not if the audience are very wide awake.

The simple secret is a fine hair attached to the rim of the penny. When the penny is covered by one of the lids the hair is still visible to anyone who knows that it is there. A white cloth makes the trick very easy; failing a cloth a sheet of stiff white paper will do.

**The Magical Match-box.**—Taking a large match-box, of the safety kind, from his pocket, the magician pushes open the drawer and shows it empty. Taking the drawer right out, he holds up the outer cover to show that there is nothing hidden in it. He slowly pushes the drawer into the cover, and pulls it out from the other end upside down! Although the drawer fits closely it has contrived to turn itself upside down in the cover. The performer pushes the drawer back into the lid, takes it out, and shows that it has turned over again.

The trick is done by means of a little slip of cardboard with blue paper gummed on it so that it resembles the under side of the drawer. This fake is concealed in a thin pocket at the top of the outer cover; so thin that it cannot be seen even when the trick is done at very close quarters. To assist in getting the fake out a tiny tab of celluloid is fastened to it.

**The Dissolving Penny.**—First spread a handkerchief on the table and pour a little water into a “pony” glass. Invite one of the audience to assist in the trick. Taking a penny from his pocket the illusionist holds it up in his right hand so that everyone can see it and

then throws the handkerchief over the penny; the audience see the penny—or, at any rate, the shape of it—under the handkerchief. The assistant is asked to hold the penny by taking hold of that part of the handkerchief which is touching it. The performer holds the glass of water immediately under the penny, so that the folds of the handkerchief hide the glass. The assistant is then asked to drop the penny into the glass. He hears it fall, but a second afterwards the conjurer whisks the handkerchief away and shows that the penny has dissolved in the water—at any rate, it is not to be seen!

When the conjurer takes the penny from his pocket he also takes out an eyeglass and keeps it concealed at the base of his second and third fingers by bending them slightly. When he covers the penny with the handkerchief he pushes up the eyeglass and keeps the penny hidden in his hand until the trick is nearly over, when he drops it into his pocket.

It is advisable, at the close of the trick, to pour the water back into the jug and to wipe the glass—with the excuse that it is wanted for another trick. Of course, in wiping the glass the conjurer gets hold of the eyeglass and slips it into his pocket.



**The Broken Match.**—Spreading his handkerchief out on his table, the conjurer places a wooden match in the centre of it and folds the corners of the handkerchief inwards, so that they cover the match. He folds the handkerchief once more in the same way and then gives it to a man to hold. The man can feel that the match is still in the handkerchief. He is asked to break the match into four pieces. The performer takes the handkerchief, shakes it out gently, and the match, now whole again, drops on the table.

The handkerchief must be a hem-stitched one prepared for the trick by slipping a match into the hem. When folding the corners to the centre it is as well to fold the corner with the match in it in front of the stick which the audience have seen. Then, when the handkerchief is picked up and turned over, the duplicate match is in the right position and the other one rests in the performer's hand.

**The Floating Disc.**—Having filled a glass with water the magician places a small metal disc on the surface of the water. The disc floats. The performer challenges anyone to do the trick, but every person who tries it fails; the disc sinks.

There are two discs, similar in appearance, but one is a circle of aluminium and the other tin. It is just a case of working the changes.

**A Die that Changes Colour.**—The conjurer holds a coloured die between his thumb and first finger, the finger being at the top of the die. He calls attention to the colour on the front and then, turning his hand round, shows the colour on the back of the die. He brings his hand round to show the front once more, rubs the back of the die with the first finger of his left hand, and slowly turns his hand round again. The colour on the back of the die has changed.

If the die is held in the position mentioned the performer will find that he can easily turn it over on his thumb. In showing the back of the die for the first time the conjurer secretly turns it over while he is turning his hand round; when bringing his hand round again so that the audience can see the face of the die for the second time the performer turns the die back to its original position. Then he has nothing more to do but to turn his hand round; the colour on the back of the die has been changed.





**The Penetrating Thimble.**—In this experiment a thimble is tossed on the table so that anyone may pick it up and examine it. Borrowing a handkerchief, the magician throws it over his left hand and, with the thimble on the first finger of his right hand, appears to push it through the handkerchief. After a few moments he holds the handkerchief up and turns it round, when the audience see that the top of the thimble has apparently been passed right through the handkerchief. The performer removes the thimble and holds up the handkerchief; the audience will look in vain for any hole in it.

A tip of a thimble, similar, of course, to the one seen by the audience, is hidden in the left hand at the start of the trick. When the conjurer pretends to push the thimble through the handkerchief he really presses the tip over the thimble—the handkerchief being between them. Both sides of the handkerchief can then be shown. To the audience the thimble appears to be lodged in a hole in the handkerchief.

**A Ring and a Loop of String.**—A piece of thin string, about a yard, and a borrowed ring are the only articles required for this little trick. The performer

ties the two ends of the string together and slips the loop thus made over his two thumbs which are held in the "thumbs up" position. He invites someone to take the loop off one of his thumbs, slip the borrowed ring on the loop, and replace it on the thumb. Then he suggests that the assistant may as well finish the trick for him ; all he has to do is to remove the ring without taking the loop from either of the thumbs.

The assistant, of course, gives it up, so the principal offers to show him how to do it. He transfers the loop of string with the ring on it, to the assistant's thumbs, makes a few quick movements, calls attention to the fact that he is not taking the loop from either of the thumbs of his assistant and—holds up the ring !

The best way to learn this trick is to get a friend to stand in front of you with a loop of string, with a ring on it, on his thumbs.

Hold your hands above the loop. With the thumb and first finger of the left hand take hold of the string nearest to you at a point about two inches from the assistant's right thumb. Take hold of the other string in the same way with the right hand. Move the left hand away from you and over the other string and the right hand towards you, so that the strings cross. Do not let go of the string held by the left hand. Place the string held by your right hand over the assistant's

right thumb. Now take hold of the string nearest to you with the right first finger. Slip the finger into the loop at a point beyond the ring and beyond the point at which the strings are crossed. Just run your first finger along the string until you can place it over the assistant's right thumb. Spread your right hand over the whole of the loop and at the same time take hold of the ring between two of your fingers. Then release the string which you have been holding in the left hand and you will find that the ring is off the loop.

**The Homing Ball.**—Hand someone a packet of cigarette papers, and ask that three papers may be torn out and screwed up into three little balls. You pick up one of the balls of paper with your right hand and openly place it in the left hand, closing the left hand over it. You do the same with a second ball. The third ball of paper you appear to flick away with your right hand, but you tell your assistant that the peculiar thing about that ball is that it knows its way home and your left hand is its home. You open your left hand and show the three balls of paper there, and if anyone asks you to "do it again" you can comply with the request immediately.

When you asked your assistant to screw the three papers into three little balls you quietly took the packet of papers back again and put it in your pocket. This gave you the opportunity to get hold of another little paper ball which you had placed there before you began the trick. This extra ball was hidden between the tips of your first and second fingers.

When you picked up the first ball of paper and dropped it into the left hand you let the other ball fall from the tips of the fingers into the hand ; then you added the second ball. In picking up the third ball you apparently flicked it away with your thumb, but the movement of the thumb was made above the ball which you held securely between the tips of your first and second fingers. Thus, at the conclusion of the trick you were in the right position for an encore ; it is not advisable to do it more than twice.

**Lighting a Lump of Sugar.**—This is a puzzling little trick to do at the coffee and cigars stage after dinner. You merely strike a match and set fire to a lump of sugar which burns with a flame. Someone is certain to say : “Well, there’s nothing in that.” “Try it,” you say, and unless the person knows the

secret he will never succeed in getting the lump of sugar to burn. To do this you secretly dab one corner of the sugar into a little cigarette ash and light the ash ; it will set fire to the sugar.

**Three Thimbles and a Pea.**—This is the well-known trick of the race-course sharper. The performer shows three ordinary thimbles and a pea. He places the thimbles in a row and puts the pea under the middle one. Then he moves all three thimbles up an inch or two and back again and invites anyone to guess under which thimble the pea will be found. The guess is invariably wrong.

One secret of the trick is in the “pea”, which is not the real thing, but a piece of india-rubber cut and coloured to resemble a pea.

The trick cannot be done neatly on a smooth surface ; if the table-cloth is fairly thick it will answer the purpose. The best cloth is one with a little pile on it. If the pea is placed under a thimble and the thimble is pushed up a few inches the pea is squeezed out of the thimble. The push must be made firmly ; the performer should press down on the thimble.

Now the learner has to master the knack of secretly picking up the pea so that no one in the audience even

suspects the pea of being anywhere else but where it was placed—under the thimble. There are two ways of doing this, and I give both of them because no two hands are exactly alike ; what is easy to one conjurer may be less easy to another.

If the performer puts his second finger and thumb on the thimble when he is going to push it up he will find that he can pick up the pea between the tips of his first and second fingers. The easier plan to most performers is as follows.

Grip the thimble firmly between the first finger and thumb. Push the thimble away a couple of inches and as the pea is squeezed out take hold of it between the tip of the second finger—which is immediately behind the thimble—and the thumb. The second finger presses the pea down on the thumb and completely hides it.

Having got the pea out of the thimble—or, rather, from under it—a reversal of the movements easily introduces the pea under any one of the three thimbles. The pea is squeezed under the thimble by releasing it just behind the thimble, and then drawing the latter over it. The thimble does not appear to be raised from the table and, if the cloth is a thick one, there is no need to lift it.

The method of showing the trick can be varied. If the audience is not a very knowing one the performer,

having got the pea into his possession, can keep it there while he asks someone to say where the pea is. He draws back the thimble indicated to show that the guess is wrong, and then draws back another thimble and in so doing gets the pea under it. This last move is made quickly, so that he appears merely to lift the thimble.

After this method has been worked a few times, the conjurer can begin by putting the centre thimble over the pea and pushing the thimble up in order to get hold of the pea. Then he pushes the other two thimbles up beyond the centre one and pulls them back in line with it; of course, he can get the pea under which thimble he pleases. With this method he can casually show that he has nothing in his hand when he is lifting one of the thimbles. Of course, the average person, having seen the pea placed under the middle thimble, and being aware that a trick is in progress, guesses that the pea is under either the left or right thimble. We will suppose that the person happens to guess correctly—say, the left thimble. The performer pushes up that thimble an inch or two and gets hold of the pea. With that he says: "This one? You're sure you wouldn't rather have the middle one or the right-hand one." As if to urge the person to change his mind he pulls both those thimbles back an inch or two and

so gets the pea under one of them. "Oh, very well," he said, "I tried to help you, but you wouldn't let me." Here he turns the left-hand thimble over, then the other thimble which is "empty" and, finally, the last thimble, disclosing the pea.

The trick requires a good deal of practice if it is to be done neatly, but it is well worth it. The performer should remember that he should have some reason for moving a thimble when he wants to move it, either to get the pea under it or to get the pea away from it. He can pretend to be anxious to get the three thimbles exactly in a line. Suppose, for instance, that he begins by having the pea under the middle thimble and he wants to get it under the right one. He pushes up the middle thimble but stops the movement before the thimble is in line with the others. Then he pulls the right thimble down and so gets the pea under it, and then the left.

The trick admits of a good many variations, and if the conjurer wishes to wind up with a laugh he can always do so by secretly getting hold of the pea and dropping it in his pocket. Then, when someone has guessed which thimble hides the pea the performer says that the whole thing is a wretched swindle, and he flicks all three thimbles over, showing that the pea has disappeared.



**The Torn Cigarette Paper.**—In this trick a cigarette paper is taken from a book of papers, torn into little pieces, and screwed up into a ball. When the ball is unrolled the pieces have been joined together again. Afterwards the paper is screwed into a ball and flicked into the fire—or, at any rate, out of reach of any inquisitive member of the audience.

The magician prepares for this trick by having three or four papers rolled up into little balls in his waistcoat pocket. If he had only one paper ball—which is really all he actually needs—he might have to fumble when he is trying to find it as he takes the book of papers out of his pocket. The ball of paper is concealed between the tips of his first and second fingers. These fingers naturally go under the paper which he openly tears out of the book and so the little ball of paper is hidden. Having torn the paper into two pieces the performer puts them together, and tears them again and then again. He screws the pieces into a ball and then works the concealed ball out of its place and on to the ball of torn pieces. Pressing the two balls tightly together between his thumb and first finger he can hold his hands open and show that he has nothing in them. Then, in unrolling the ball made by the whole paper he works the other ball into the position formerly occupied by the whole

one—between the tips of his first and second fingers. Having unrolled the whole paper and displayed it to the audience, he screws it up into a ball, including with it the pieces, and flicks the whole lot away.

There is another method of doing the trick. Instead of having a ball of paper hidden between the tips of his first and second fingers he has it pasted on to the paper he shows to the audience. To prepare for the trick take two papers and put a tiny blob of good paste into the centre of one of them; press the other paper on the top of it. When the paste is dry screw one of the papers into a tight little ball. The paste will show because the paper is thin, but by keeping a finger over the spot and passing the paper from one hand to the other the audience will not notice the spot of paste and they should be convinced that the performer has only the one paper in his hands. Then all that he has to do is to tear the paper into pieces, screw them up tightly, and open out the other ball. The ball made of the little pieces will adhere to the paper, and so the conjurer is able to spread his fingers wide apart and show that he has nothing concealed in his hands.



**A Feat of Memory.**—The performer shows six cards, numbered one to six in large figures ; the cards are shuffled and placed on a tray. Going to a member of the audience the magician asks that one card may be taken, looked at, remembered, and replaced on the tray. He then asks to be told the figure on the card.

The same request is made to about fifteen members of the audience ; the performer passes from one to another as quickly as possible.

Returning to his table he explains what has been done, and adds that the experiment he is about to attempt is not a trick, but a little feat of memory ; he has remembered which card each person chose.

He invites those who took cards to hold up their hands for a moment, and directly they do so tells each one what card he, or she, took.

In one sense this is what the performer says it is—a feat of memory, but the memory is aided in the following way.

As each card is taken the conjurer imagines that he sees a certain object placed on the person's head. For example, one meaning of ace (there is no ace, of course, in the numbered cards, but the figure 1 stands for an ace) is a distinguished airman. Directly a member of the audience has taken a card with the figure 1 on it, the performer imagines that he sees a model of an

aeroplane on that person's head. The rest of the little code may be :—

Figure 2. A glass of whisky. (You may have heard of a “double”.)

Figure 3. Three babies. (Triplets.)

Figure 4. A golf ball. (You have heard of “fore”.)

Figure 5. A Nap hand.

Figure 6. A cricket bat. (Because sometimes a ball is hit for six.)

Any other code will do equally well as long as it can be remembered easily.

Directly the performer knows what card a person has taken he looks at that person's head and imagines that the article representing the chosen number is on the person's head. The mental picture remains in his subconscious mind for a few minutes, and when he has once composed it he need not think about it until the person holds up a hand ; then he will immediately recall the picture and will therefore know the number.

The trick has a much better effect than one would imagine from reading this explanation. If any member of the audience says that the feat is easy and that he could do it, let him try ! He will not remember the first six figures in their right order.



**The Hypnotized Cigar.**—Borrowing a cigar from a member of the audience, the magician holds his right hand with the palm upwards and places the cigar across the fingers. Making a few passes with his left hand over the cigar, he quickly turns his hand over, but the cigar does not fall from the hand. He moves his hand about and holds it with the back towards the audience, and still the cigar adheres to the hand. Then, suddenly, he takes the cigar between his fingers and hands it back to its owner.

The whole secret is a small pin, which has been inserted in the middle of the cigar directly it is in his hands. In placing the cigar across his fingers he opens two fingers slightly and so grips the pin between them. When the trick is over the pin is pulled out and allowed to fall on to the carpet. It is as well to bring the trick to a close abruptly, and then the pin can be removed before anyone realizes that the trick is finished.

**Burning a Hole in a Handkerchief.**—The conjurer borrows a handkerchief from someone in his audience and throws it over his left hand, which he closes into a fist. He then tucks the centre of the handkerchief into the hand. Asking the owner's permission to burn

a little hole in the handkerchief, he pushes his cigarette into his closed left hand—and, therefore, into the handkerchief. A moment afterwards he takes the handkerchief by two corners and holds it up to the audience ; there is no hole in it and no sign of any burn.

For this trick a little “thumb tip” made of metal and painted flesh colour is required. One of these things can be bought at any conjuring shop. The “tip” is in the performer’s right-hand waistcoat pocket. When the handkerchief is being handed to him he sticks his right thumb into the “tip” and so gets it out of the pocket. In tucking the handkerchief into his hand he leaves the “thumb tip” behind ; the lighted cigarette (there should be only a short piece), is placed in the tip. The cigarette is pushed well into the hand with the thumb and so the “thumb tip” is got out again with the cigarette in it. Then the handkerchief is held up by two corners for a moment ; the handkerchief hides the “thumb tip” and the hands are empty. In handing back the handkerchief to its owner, the performer gets rid of the “thumb tip” by dropping it into the side pocket of his coat.

**Passing a Piece of Ribbon Through a Handkerchief.**—For this effective little trick a handkerchief

is borrowed and pushed into the closed hand, as in the preceding trick. Then the magician shows a piece of narrow ribbon, about a foot long, and pushes it into the handkerchief in his closed left hand. Turning his hand over he pulls out the ribbon from the other side of the hand, thus showing that the ribbon has passed right through the handkerchief.

In this case a "thumb tip" is put into the left hand in the way described in the previous trick. The ribbon is pushed into the tip which is secretly removed on the thumb. In turning over the left hand the performer secretly leaves the "thumb tip" in the hand—but, of course, it is now below the handkerchief. Then the ribbon is pulled out and, in turning the left hand over again and getting hold of the corners of the handkerchief, so that he may display it to the audience, the performer gets his right thumb into the tip once more.

**The Magnetized Knife.**—Taking a borrowed dinner knife the illusionist lays it across the fingers of his right hand and holds his hand with its back to the audience. The knife does not fall, but remains attached, by some invisible agency, to the fingers. Even when he waves his hand in the air the knife remains in position.

The trick, he explains, is done by magnetism and if someone will take the knife away slowly he will feel the "pull" he has on it. He holds his hand out to a member of the audience who finds that the knife really does seem to be drawn to the fingers in some mysterious way.

The secret is in the way in which the fingers grip the knife. The tips of the little finger, and second and third fingers on the back of the knife draw the knife inwards, and the tip of the first finger pushes against the sharp edge. In this way the knife is made to adhere to the tips of the fingers.

**A Passing Musical Note.**—A wine-glass and a fork are on the conjurer's table. He holds the fork in his right hand and snaps the prongs together with the thumb and first finger of his left hand, so that the vibration produces a musical note. Keeping his thumb and first finger together he reaches over to the glass and puts his thumb and finger inside ; directly he does so the audience hear the sound repeated. He seems to have carried the note with his thumb and finger to the glass.

The magician is seated at the table ; there must be



no cloth on the table. Directly the thumb and finger go into the glass the performer lets the end of the fork rest on the table, and then the sound is reproduced. Of course, when the performer does this he looks intently at the glass and ignores the fork ; the audience will behave in the same way—every time !

# **THE BEST CARD TRICKS**



## THE BEST CARD TRICKS

Although the Tricks in this chapter are more advanced, they can be performed by any amateur who cares to take a little trouble to master them.

**The Telephone Trick.**—Show six cards and ask someone in your audience to think of any one of the six and to name the card. Next request him to go to the telephone and ring up a number which you give him, to ask for a Mr. ——. “What card have I just selected, Mr. —?” is the question to be asked. The person thus rung up will reply correctly to the question.

And this is how it is done. The man at the other end of the telephone is an accomplice, of course. The names of the six cards to be used in the trick have been written down by him, and against each one is written the name of a person. Thus, against the first card is written a name beginning with “A”. Against the second card is written a name beginning with “B”, and so on with the remaining four cards. The conjurer remembers the names and the cards.

All he has to do, therefore, when he knows the card which his assistant has selected, is to ask him to

ring up the number and ask for Mr. —, filling in the name given to that particular card.

His accomplice knows, directly he hears the name, which card is being thought of.

**“Thought-Transference.”**—A medium or confederate is necessary also in this trick.

The conjurer asks someone to take three consecutive cards from a pack, which has really been pre-arranged in a certain order, and to place them in a row on the table. He says it is quite impossible for him to know the cards, but he will look at them, think of them, and then “transfer his thoughts” to the medium sitting at the other end of the room beyond and behind the audience. So that the medium will not be suspected of looking for signals he turns his back on the performer during the process of “thought-transference”. The medium names the cards correctly.

This is the explanation : directly the chosen cards are taken away the magician holds quite casually the top half of the pack, from the bottom of which the cards have been selected, with its face towards the audience, and the medium sees the bottom card. Knowing the order of the cards, the medium can then tell at

once which three cards are on the table. By that time, as the medium has memorized the pack by means of a code, he knows which cards must follow the bottom one shown to him by the performer. Those are the three cards taken away by the member of the audience. Here is the code-sentence which enables the pack to be memorized—Eight kings threatened to save nine fair ladies for one sick knave.

The pack should be arranged in the order : diamonds, spades, hearts, clubs.

The interpretation of the code is—Eight (eight)—kings (King)—threatened (three, ten)—to (two)—save (seven)—nine (nine)—fair (five)—ladies (Queen)—for (four)—one (Ace)—sick (six)—knave (Jack).

By memorizing this sentence and remembering the order of the different suits in the pack, the code is made easy, if the cards are previously arranged in their correct positions.

Many tricks can be done by means of this code.

**Some More "Mind-Reading."**—Taking six cards from the pack, the magician asks someone to think of them and then to replace the cards.

Dealing the cards in small lots of five or six, the

conjurer asks the spectator, as he does so, if he can see the card of which he is thinking. Directly the answer "Yes" is given the conjurer names the card.

In this case, when the six cards are returned to the pack the conjurer slips his little finger under all of them and, by means of the pass, that dexterous movement which can be acquired with a little practise, brings the lot to the bottom of the pack. He then shuffles the cards, taking care not to disturb those at the bottom of the pack, and immediately afterwards deals a few cards and includes in the lot one of those from the bottom of the pack. Thus, in each lot he exposes there will always be one of the six cards which the spectator took, and this one will be the bottom card. Therefore, directly the conjurer is told that the card of which the spectator is thinking is visible he knows at once which card it is, and names it.

In this "thought-reading" trick, the conjurer comes forward with a new pack of cards. He calls attention to the fact that the Government stamp is on the wrapper before he breaks open the pack, and holds out the cards, first to one spectator and then another, until about a dozen cards have been chosen. When the required number of cards has been selected, the conjurer hands the pack to each person who has taken a card, and asks him to return it himself and to shuffle

the cards. When all the cards have been returned to the pack, the magician asks those who took cards to think of them, and then he tells them of what cards they are thinking.

Let me point out again that the pack of cards is a new one, and that it is not tampered with in any way before it is opened.

The secret is that cards belonging to one particular "brand" are packed in the same way. Open any pack of "Steamboats"—these are made especially for conjuring, though they look like ordinary cards—and you will find that the cards are packed in this order : Spades 2-10 ; Diamonds 2-10 ; Hearts 2-7, and Ace, King, Queen, Jack ; Diamonds, King, Queen, Jack, Ace ; Spades, Ace, King, Queen, Jack ; Clubs, King, Queen, Jack, Ace ; Hearts 8-10 ; Clubs 2-10.

This order must be committed to memory, but it is not a difficult task to do this.

To discover the chosen card one must, while walking away to another member of the audience, turn up with the left thumb the corner of the card immediately above that which was taken.

It will be noted that the magician does not have each card returned immediately after it has been taken away.

If the man selecting a card were given the opportunity to replace it at once, he might upset the order of the cards.



**A Quiet Smoke.**—The services of a confederate are required for the following card trick which will baffle most people.

In the temporary absence of the performer, a card is selected from a pack and shown to the members of the audience. When he returns to the room, he names the chosen card.

And this is how it's done : before the trick starts the confederate lights a cigarette and stands behind the others, apparently engaged only in watching and smoking, but actually giving signals to the performer.

The performer should place his hand to his forehead as if to "control his thoughts", but really to get a chance of observing his confederate's signals.

The code is as follows : if the card is an ace, the cigarette is held in the right hand by the thumb and first finger. If a two, it is held in the same hand by the thumb and second finger ; if a three, the same hand and third finger ; if a four, the same hand by thumb and little finger ; if a five, the same hand by thumb and first two fingers ; if a six, the same hand by thumb and two middle fingers ; if a seven, the same hand by thumb, third and little finger ; if eight, the same hand by thumb and all the fingers ; if a nine, it is held left hand by thumb and first finger ; if a ten, in the left hand by thumb and second finger ; if a knave, in the left

hand by thumb and third finger ; if a queen, in the left hand by thumb and first two fingers ; if a king, in the left hand by thumb and all the fingers. To give the different suits, the cigarette is placed or held as follows : clubs, put the cigarette in the right-hand corner of the mouth ; hearts, place the cigarette in the left-hand corner of the mouth ; spades, have the cigarette in the middle of the mouth ; diamonds, hold it away from the mouth.

To perform the trick of making a card "jump", show the top card of the pack and place it in the centre. Command it to jump back to its former place on the top, and ask anyone to prove that it has not obeyed your command.

This is how it is done : the top card of the pack is the eight of clubs ; the second card is the seven of clubs. Take off these two cards and show them as one ; then put them back on top of the pack. Take off the top card (the eight of clubs) and place it slowly in the centre of the pack. When it is half-way into the pack show the face of it to the audience, who, seeing the top half, believe that it is really the seven of clubs. But you must be sure to keep your hand over the index number in the corner.

**The Jumping Ace.**—It is easy to mystify an audience with this trick. The conjurer takes the ace of diamonds, the ace of clubs and the ace of spades from the pack and holds them towards the audience with the ace of diamonds in the centre and the other two cards diagonally across it, so that only the top of the red ace is seen. The conjurer then takes one of the black aces and openly places it at the bottom of the pack. The other black ace is laid on the top of the pack, and next the conjurer takes the remaining ace and puts it in the centre of the pack. To convince the audience that everything so far has been quite fair he shows the top and bottom cards once more. Everyone sees that they are the two black aces.

“Now,” says the conjurer, “we will place one black ace in the centre of the pack and another a few cards away.” He puts both aces in the centre of the pack. Then he continues: “We have all three aces—the ace of clubs, the ace of spades and the ace of diamonds—in the centre of the pack. Ace of diamonds—jump!”

He taps the top of the pack and asks someone to take off the top card. It is the ace of diamonds. Someone is sure to suggest that there must be more than one ace of diamonds in the pack, whereupon the conjurer hands the pack out for inspection and anyone can prove

to the satisfaction of the audience that it contains only the usual number of aces.

It is so easily explained. The trick is brought about solely by the manner in which the cards are held in the first place, and by a little subterfuge. In running through the cards with the object of taking out the three aces the conjurer secretly pushes the ace of diamonds on to the top of the pack and takes from it the ace of hearts and the two black aces. He places the two black aces over the ace of hearts so that only the point of the heart is visible. The ace of hearts then appears to be the ace of diamonds. After the conjurer has put the two black aces in the centre of the pack he has really finished the trick, and the rest is showmanship.

**Orders Obeyed.**—In this trick, the ability to palm cards is necessary. The performer takes two red cards of any number, say the ten of hearts and ten of diamonds, and places them under a handkerchief on the table. He puts the two black tens under another handkerchief. He then commands them to change places, and, lifting the handkerchief, shows that his "command" has been "obeyed".

It is done in this way. The conjurer has two extra

black tens in his right-hand trousers pocket. In taking out the two handkerchiefs to be used in the trick he palms these cards. Picking up the two red tens, he covers them with the palmed black ones and shows the two red ones. The audience are unaware of the presence of the two black ones behind the red ones. In covering these with a large handkerchief the conjurer palms away the two red ones, but as the audience see the shape of the remaining two cards under the handkerchief they believe they are the same two cards they have just seen—the red ones. In picking up the two black tens, the magician palms the two red ones on top of them and squaring the cards shows the face of the front black ten. The audience believe that only the two black cards are there. In covering these with the second handkerchief the conjurer palms away the two black tens and leaves the two red ones under the handkerchief. He slips the two palmed cards into a pocket and commands the cards to “change over”.

**Caught Out.**—Here is another trick in which the conjurer has three or four cards selected and returned to the pack. Taking the pack in his left hand, and showing his right hand empty, he throws the cards

into the air, and while they are falling catches at some of them with his right hand. When the other cards have dropped the conjurer is seen to be holding the cards that were selected and returned to the pack.

It will require practice to do this. When the cards are returned the conjurer brings them to the top of the pack by means of the pass, and turning a little to his right, palms them off the pack and then back-palms them. The selected cards are now at the back of the right hand, which can then be shown with the palm towards the audience. The conjurer throws up the pack with his left hand and in putting his right hand among the falling cards brings those which were palmed to view again.

Another variation of the trick is that the magician has two cards selected and returned to the pack. He then throws the whole pack into the air, quickly plunges his hand among the falling cards, and catches two cards, which are found to be the two cards which were selected.

In this case, the two cards were brought to the top of the pack by means of the pass and then one of them was shuffled to the bottom of the pack. The conjurer held the pack with his thumb in the middle of one side and his fingers in the middle of the other. In

throwing up the pack the top and bottom cards were thus drawn away from the rest and all that the conjurer had to do was to grip them tightly while he placed his hand among the falling cards.

**A Boomerang.**—Here is the boomerang trick : the conjurer throws a card away from him and causes it to return to his hand ; as it comes back he picks up a pair of scissors and, catching the card with them, cuts it in halves.

To do this the magician holds the card between the second finger and thumb, with the first finger curled over the top corner. He then bends the hand inwards so that the card nearly touches the wrist, and in throwing the card away from him jerks it back by means of the first finger on the corner. The card is thrown away, but is revolving on its own axis all the time, and this motion causes it to return to the thrower.

To tear a pack of cards in half hold them by putting the right hand over one end of the pack and the left hand under the opposite end with the fingers on the opposite side.

Now the pack can be held tightly between the two hands and by suddenly twisting the two hands—the

right hand towards him and the left hand away from him the conjurer contrives to tear the pack. Cheap cards are the easiest to tear.

**In the Dark.**—The performer requests the person taking a card to show it to someone else, so there may be no doubt afterwards as to which card was taken. He then explains that he is going to perform the trick in the dark, that is to say, the cards are going to be in the “dark”.

He squares up the pack and asks the person who has taken the card to place it in the centre of the pack. The conjurer then puts the cards in the “dark” by covering them with a handkerchief and placing them on the table. Directly he has done so he asks the person who took the card to think of it, and the conjurer at once names the card.

This is the secret : when the card is being shown to the second person, the conjurer has ample time to make the necessary move for the accomplishment of the trick. He turns over the bottom card of the pack so that when he squares up the cards and holds them with the bottom card upwards, the cards appear to be all face downwards in the usual way. When the card is



returned all that the conjurer has to do is to turn over the pack once more and spread out the cards on the table while he is covering them with a handkerchief. He is then able to see the chosen card through the handkerchief because that card is facing him.

Having asked someone to cut the pack and to remember the card at which he made the cut, the performer picks up the cards and, running them over, at once names the card at which the person looked.

How is it done ? Well, few persons ever replace the card properly. It will be found that most people replace the portion they lift off in such a way that the cards are not quite level. In other words, they leave what is known as a "step". In picking up the cards the conjurer presses down on the pack with his first finger so as not to shift the cards at the step, and he is then able to discover exactly where the pack was cut.

**A Fitting End.**—A woman in the audience is asked to name any card she likes, and upon her doing so the performer finds it in the pack and gives it to her with a request to tear it up. This being done, one corner is retained and the remaining pieces are "vanished" or burnt, and upon the card being reproduced minus one corner the retained piece exactly fits.

The following apparatus is needed: a "magic" pistol, a plate, three packs of thin cards, exactly alike, a small frame, and a small cap of stiff black paper to fit over one corner of a card giving the appearance of the corner being missing when held against a black coat.

The pistol, frame and plate are on the table and the corner fake in a convenient pocket. One pack is arranged in a known order so that a given card may be instantly found. This packet is concealed in a small pocket behind the left hip with one end protruding so as to be easily pulled out. The other two packs are arranged as one big pack in regular order, each suit separately, and all duplicate cards together, i.e., 2, 2; 3, 3; 4, 4; 5, 5; 6, 6; 7, 7; 8, 8; 9, 9; 10, 10; Kn, Kn; Q, Q; K, K; Ace, Ace. The performer comes forward with a double pack in his hand, taking care to hold it so that the extra thickness is not noticeable. The thinnest cards are, of course, the best for this trick.

Supposing the woman selects the four of diamonds, he runs through the pack until he comes to the two cards of that name. He then takes one out and hands it to her, slipping his little finger under the other one (cards are face upwards); the "pass" is then made and the pack turned back upwards, this bringing the duplicate four of diamonds to the top, and while instructing the woman how to tear up the card she has, he tears

one of the lower corners off the top card and palms it in the right hand. This is a simple move, as all eyes are on the woman's card. The fingers of the hand holding the pack must close over it so as to hide the missing corner. The performer picks up the plate from the table with the left hand (which holds the pack) and asks the woman to place the pieces on it. He then selects one corner (really the palmed one) and gives it to her and carries the plate back to the table in his right hand. Under cover of putting the plate down (right side to audience) he drops the double pack (except the top card, the four of diamonds) into his "profonde" (a specially made inside pocket in the "tails", used by conjurers, amateur and professional, for the quick disposal of cards), and obtains the other arranged pack, which he places on the table, retaining the four of diamonds with the corner off in his palm. This sounds difficult, but will be understood better if the performer palms the card off before changing the packs. The palmed card does not interfere with the change.

He then picks up the frame and takes the back out, handing the whole thing for examination. While this is being done he obtains the loan of a handkerchief, and asking permission of the woman who selected the card originally, he spreads it on her lap. Then, obtaining possession of the frame, he puts the back on, at the

same time slipping the palmed card in, and placing it face downwards on the handkerchief, asks the woman to wrap it up by folding the four corners inward. The performer loads the pieces of card into his pistol from the plate and fires in the air, and the woman finds the card in the frame, testifying to the corner fitting exactly. While attention is fixed on the woman, the performer picks up the pack from the table, and in accordance with his memorized system, makes the pass at the nearest point and gets the four of diamonds to the top. Dropping his hand to his pocket, he obtains the black corner, slips it on the card and keeps it concealed with his fingers. By this time the woman will have finished her part of the trick by seeing that the corner fits. It is now that the card is changed for the duplicate with the fake. Taking the card in his right hand, he also picks up the handkerchief with the same hand and places the latter in his left, which holds the pack. At the moment the hands are together, the card is changed for the one on the pack, keeping the black corner concealed by the fingers. The handkerchief is then handed to the owner. Turning again to the woman, the performer asks for the missing corner, holding out a card as a kind of tray for her to put it on. Holding them at arm's length he walks back to the table ostensibly to place the pack down, but really to get sufficiently far

from the spectators to show the card (with the fake) against his coat which, of course, everyone takes to be the same card as the woman had. All he has to do now is to palm the loose corner and fake under pretence of running the card and piece together and getting rid of them into his "profonde" as he advances to have the card examined.

**Aces Become Kings.**—For this the performer has the assistance of two men from the audience.

They are handed an ordinary pack of cards, with a request to remove the four aces and four kings from the pack, and, if they desire, privately to mark them with a pencil. Two ordinary envelopes are also examined, and on one they write "Aces", on the other "Kings", The performer calls for the envelopes on which "Aces" has been written, in full view placing the aces inside the envelope, and giving it in charge of one of the men. In like manner, he places the kings in the other envelope which is held by the second man.

The marked aces and kings change place from one envelope to the other !

Take a duplicate ace of hearts and a duplicate king of diamonds, fake these cards by colouring their backs the same as your table-top, preferably a dead black.

Have these faked cards lying face downwards on the table-top, where they will be invisible by reason of the faked backs. You are also provided with an ordinary pack of cards, two ordinary envelopes and a lead pencil. Obtain the assistance of two men ; hand them the pack with a request to remove the four aces and kings and mark them as already indicated.

While the examination of the envelopes is in progress, take back the aces first by showing the cards, then shuffle, and toy with them. If the ace of hearts is not already in front bring it there. In the same manner take back kings ; see that the king of diamonds is in front. Place the packet of four aces down over your fake king of diamonds and your packet of kings over the fake ace of hearts, showing your hands entirely empty. Now call for the envelope on which "Aces" is written ; take up from the table apparently the four aces, really the kings, with fake ace in front ; the audience seeing the front card unchanged do not suspect a change has been made. Take the envelope and, turning cards with backs to spectators (after showing them) appear to place them in it. In reality the four kings go inside the envelope, the fake ace is allowed to slide down behind it, held by thumb of hand holding envelope ; in the act of raising the envelope to lips to seal flap (a natural movement) palm the fake ace in left hand. Give

envelope back to the men, getting rid of the palmed fake cards meanwhile. Now pick up (apparently) the packet of kings (really aces with faked king in front) and repeat the movements as above.

**The Three Statesmen.**—Requisites : spirit-writing slate ; plain frame with clear glass front and loose back fastened in with cross-bar ; forcing pack ; photographs of three statesmen pasted on back of three cards to match forcing pack ; and paper bag made double—really two bags fastened together.

*Effect.*—The freely selected cards leave a marked envelope held by one of the audience, and appear in the empty frame. The names of three cards are found written on two slates. In place of the cards, the envelope contains three photographs of statesmen, whose names are found written on a piece of paper which has been freely selected out of a dozen or more collected from the audience, after they have written on them the names of any three statesmen.

*Secret.*—Arrange forcing pack as follows : suppose it is composed of ace, ten and three, put a ten, then a three, then an ace and so on through the pack. Offer the pack to be cut and have the three top cards taken ;

they are bound to be the three cards you wish to force. Have them shown to the audience and put in the envelope. Take the envelope, and, in walking back to the stage, change it; then, as if you had forgotten, say you will have it marked (the spectators will then, of course, mark the changed envelope, which contains the three photos). Leave it with the audience. Next give out a number of slips of paper for them to write the names of the three statesmen. Collect the slips in bag, double bag, one side containing several slips, all having written on them the names of the three statesmen you have in the envelope. In walking back, turn bag around, and ask someone freely to select any paper he chooses—all being alike he cannot take the wrong one—and retain it. Now show slate, on which you have beforehand written the names of the three cards you forced, and covered up with loose flap—blank at both sides—and put it down on the table. Next call attention to the frame, which you take to pieces. Take out the back, then the brown paper, which now has the cards underneath, without turning it over (cards will now face the glass), and put in the back. Fasten all up in the handkerchief, without letting the audience see the front of the frame, or they will see the cards there, and give it to someone to hold. Command the changes to take place, and show the slate with the names of the cards



written on the frame, with the three cards in, while the envelope will contain the three photos of the statesmen whose names are written on the slip of paper.

**Boxed.**—Having shuffled a pack of cards, the conjurer places it in a little wooden box, into which it exactly fits, and closes the lid. He asks someone to mention a small number under ten. Suppose the number is “five”.

“Very well,” says the conjurer, “we shall deal with the five top cards of the pack in the box. Will you please take the box from the table and give it to me?”

The performer then names the five top cards and removes them one at a time, as he names them. The box can be thoroughly examined, and the cards are, of course, above suspicion.

The trick is done in the following manner: the lid of the box is almost as deep as the box itself and is ornamented with a small black disc of wood in the centre. This little disc is there for a purpose. When the conjurer opens the box, the audience see that the disc in the lid goes right through it—or apparently goes right through it. As a matter of fact the disc seen in the inside of the lid is not the one in the lid

itself. It is the disc in a thin wooden flap fitting snugly, but not tightly, in the lid. Behind that flap are ten cards, with their faces towards the flap. Therefore, when the box is closed and the flap falls down on to the pack, the ten cards fall with it, and as the side of the flap which is then uppermost is covered with the back of a card, it passes as a card. The pack with the fake in it can be taken out of the box and the box can be given for examination. Of course, the conjurer must know the top ten cards by heart and in their right order.

**A "Nippy" Trick.**—After shuffling a pack of cards, the magician lifts off about half of them and gives the cards to a member of the audience. Requesting that he will select three of the cards and return the remainder, the conjurer turns his back on the audience while the person holds up the three selected cards. The conjurer then turns round, hands back the remainder of the pack to the person who chose the three cards, and asks him to shuffle the cards. The performer calls attention to the fact that during the whole progress of the trick he does not once touch the selected cards himself.

The cards are spread out, face upwards, on a tray,

and the conjurer, holding a pair of small tweezers, asks the person who selected the cards to touch his wrist. He then picks up the selected cards, one at a time, with the tweezers.

It is done in this way. The shuffle is a false one. The conjurer does not disturb the top half of the pack. After three of these cards have been selected the conjurer turns his back on the audience (for the reason given above) and quietly drops the cards into his "profonde" and takes out some other cards, all of which are different from those first shown. Thus, when the cards are spread out on a tray no duplicates are visible. These cards have the white portion of their faces slightly tinged with yellow.

To get this colour, spread the cards out to the light for a day or two. The rest is easy, because the conjurer can distinguish the chosen cards by the fact that they are slightly different in colour from the rest, being a dead white.

**Disappearing Aces.**—The four aces are shown and laid on the table. Three cards are dealt out behind each ace. The aces are placed on the packets of three cards. A packet is chosen by the audience and placed on one side. The other three packets are turned over

and the cards dealt out. The aces have disappeared. All four aces are found together in the packet chosen by the audience.

This is the way in which it is done : the first three packets of three cards are in reality packets of four cards. This is easily managed. The top two cards are taken off the pack together and shown as one card. As each card is dealt, its face is shown to the audience. When three packets have been dealt, the conjurer deals three cards which, unknown to the audience, are three duplicate aces ; that is to say, these aces and the one behind which they are placed make up the four aces. These duplicate aces are, of course, dealt face downwards, but as the audience have seen the faces of the cards in the first three packets they are not likely to question this move. In squaring up each of the first three packets the conjurer contrives to get a little bit of wax under his finger-nail on to the tops of the cards. He then covers each packet with an ace, and in doing so presses down on the first three aces. The fourth packet is then forced on the audience. The other three packets are dealt out face downwards, and as the aces adhere to the cards over which they were placed, they are "missing". The other packet is then turned over.



**Take a Count.**—*Effect.*—A spectator takes a card, returns it and shuffles the pack. The conjurer spreads the cards out in a line on the table and announces that the spectator is unable to see his card. The spectator admits that he cannot see it. The conjurer picks up the cards, shuffles them, and spreads them out again. “Now,” says he, “you can see your card, can’t you?” The spectator admits that he can. The conjurer immediately gathers up the cards, squares up the pack, tells the spectator the name of his card and the position of it in the pack, counting from the top. The spectator is invited to count the cards and to see if the statement is correct.

*Explanation.*—The conjurer brings the card to the top of the pack and pushing it down with his thumb gets a glimpse at the index. He then knows the card. In spreading out the cards in a line so that they overlap one another, he takes care to hide the top card under the others. In picking up the cards and shuffling them, the magician takes off the bottom half, and in the act of shuffling some of them on the top of the others counts the cards he shuffles on the top by drawing them off one at a time with his left thumb. Then when he exposes the cards again, he can easily reckon which was the chosen one and he knows its position in the pack.



**Shuffle and See.**—A new pack of cards is taken by the conjurer, who breaks open the wrapper, gives out the cards for examination, and asks anyone to shuffle them.

Having had the cards shuffled by the audience, the performer invites someone to take a card and to replace it in the pack. He then shuffles the pack, and shows that the card chosen is neither at the top nor at the bottom of the pack. He produces the chosen card in any way he pleases. Perhaps the most effective way of doing this is to spread out the cards in the hands, and ask the person who chooses a card to think of it directly he sees it. After a few moments the conjurer immediately names the card.

The secret for the trick consists in one faked card. It has a small crescent-shaped piece cut out of one end. This card can easily be added to the others when the conjurer receives the pack back from the audience. The faked card is kept at first at the bottom of the pack. After a card has been chosen, the conjurer gets it to the middle of the pack, and has the chosen card placed on the top of it. The pack is then squared up.

Holding the pack in the left hand, and lightly covering it with his right, the conjurer "ruffles" the left-hand corner with his thumb, while asking the chooser of the card to think of it. The conjurer then "ruffles"

the end of the pack with his right thumb, and he knows that the pack will "break" at the faked card. This card will travel past the thumb, and the next card to it is the chosen card. The conjurer bends the pack slightly and gets a glimpse of it.

A second secret is a faked card made up in such a way that the whole pack, with the faked card in it, can be handed out to anyone to shuffle without the slightest fear of the discovery that one of the cards has been tampered with.

The faked card is easily made. The white edge of a card is first trimmed away, and the centre which is left is gummed on to the centre of another card. Thus the faked card will be slightly thicker in the centre than any other card, and the chosen card, replaced upon it, can be discovered quite easily by running the thumb along either end of the pack.

This secret also affords an excellent method of doing the blindfold trick. The conjurer can have the cards replaced on the faked card, and the pack immediately squared up. If he pleases, he can shuffle the cards, so long as he takes care not to disturb those immediately above the faked card. (If only one card has been chosen, either when this or the other faked card is used, there is little fear of the two cards being disturbed by an ordinary shuffle.) Having had the cards squared up,

and having shown, after the shuffle, that the cards chosen are neither at the top nor at the bottom of the pack, the conjurer asks someone to blindfold him, and as he is not dependent upon the slightest speck of light for accomplishing the trick, he can even have his eyes covered with pads of cotton-wool before the handkerchief is placed over his eyes. He takes a small knife in his hand and spreads out the pack on the table. The chosen cards are above the faked card. The position of the faked card is discovered by the touch of the fingers, and the cards immediately above it are pulled out to the edge of the table. The rest requires no explanation.

With regard to the use of the first faked pack, I may say that this gives anyone an easy way of producing any chosen cards from the pocket after the chosen cards have been returned to the pack, the pack has been returned to the conjurer and placed in his pocket. He can shuffle the pack casually before putting it in his pocket, and then ask the choosers of the cards if their cards are at the top or bottom of the pack. When the pack is in his pocket the conjurer merely has to run his thumb along the end, and the cards above the faked card will be the chosen cards. He turns this portion of the pack over and produces them one by one, or, if he pleases, he can leave the chosen cards in his pocket



after he has removed the first card, and offer the pack to anyone to shuffle, and then put it back in his pocket. When the last chosen card has been taken out of his pocket, the conjurer takes out all the cards except the faked card, and goes on to the next trick. The use of a faked card is then not suspected.

**Pick and Choose.**—A few cards—about half the pack—are held out by the performer, and he asks someone to select a card, look at it and replace it. The conjurer immediately gives out the pack to be shuffled, and directly he takes it back again he is able to pick out the chosen card.

It will be understood, of course, that this is not a trick, but a method by which a trick can be performed. No conjurer would be content merely to find the card; he would want to produce it in an effective manner. This merely shows how the card is discovered under these conditions. There are countless ways of producing the chosen card afterwards.

The conjurer should take the pack of cards in his hand, and draw from it the ace, three, five, six, seven, eight and nine of spades, clubs and hearts.

It will be seen that the cards with the odd numbers

can be arranged so that single pips on the cards point in one direction. The aces' pips are obvious. In the three, the centre pip gives the clue; the same with the five. In the seven and nine the single pip in the centre of the card gives the clue; and in the six and eight the two centre pips on either side give the clue.

Now arrange the cards so that the pips giving the clue point all in one direction. If one card is chosen, and while the chooser is looking at it, the conjurer quietly reverses the cards he holds. It will be obvious that when the conjurer looks at the cards again, after they have been shuffled by a member of the audience, he can easily pick out the chosen card, because the pip giving the clue will point in the opposite direction to that of all the "clue pips" in all other cards.

**Where are The Aces ?—***Effect.*—The conjurer places the four aces, face upwards, in a row on the table. He puts them back on top of the pack and makes a sharp clicking noise with the pack (technically known as a "riffle"). A man who has been asked to assist in the trick is then invited to say where the aces are. Having heard the noise of the "riffle", he will probably believe that the aces have been brought by sleight-of-hand to the middle of the pack, and will probably say so. If he

does say so, the conjurer at once shows that the aces are still on the top of the pack. If, on the other hand, the man says that the cards are still on top of the pack, the conjurer quickly makes the pass and brings them to the middle and shows them there. Then he says he will begin the trick again, and once more he puts the aces down on the table, and then on the top of the pack. The same little piece of by-play is carried out, and the aces are put down on the table for the third time, and for the third time, also, put on the top of the pack. This time the conjurer does the latter part of the work very slowly, and then asks: "Now, you are quite convinced that the aces are on the top of the pack?" There can be no doubt about this, and the man questioned is sure to say "Yes". The conjurer says he will get on with the trick, and this time deals the four aces face downwards on the table and then deals three cards on each ace. The assistant is asked to choose two of the packets and then one of the packets, so that finally there is only one packet on the table. The conjurer announces that he will try to make the three aces which have been returned to the pack change places with the three indifferent cards which are on the top of the fourth ace on the table. He riffles the cards three times, and then turns over the four cards on the table. They are the four aces.

*Explanation.*—Before showing this trick the conjurer secretly places three indifferent cards in his right-hand trousers pocket. He is then ready to perform the trick. To make the “riffle”, he holds the cards in the left hand with the first finger pressed against the back of them. By pressing on one corner of the pack with the thumb and releasing the cards in that corner quickly, the conjurer makes a snapping noise with them. After the performer has put the cards on the table he stands for a second with his hands in his trousers pocket. It is as well for him to take up this attitude, a perfectly natural one, all through the trick, because when he wants to make use of the three cards in his pocket no-one is likely to suspect him of using his pockets for the purpose of the trick.

The first two attempts at hoodwinking the assistant in regard to the position of the aces are of no consequence. There is no trickery required beyond the making of the pass, and even that is not always necessary, because often the assistant will help the conjurer by affirming that the aces are in the centre of the pack or at the bottom, in which case all that the conjurer has to do is to turn up the aces on the top and show that they have not moved from that position.

At the third attempt, the aces are placed slowly on the top of the pack, and once more the conjurer puts

his hands into his pockets as he stands with an expectant attitude and says : "Now you're quite convinced that the aces are there ?" This time he quietly palms the three indifferent cards from his pocket and, in the act of squaring up the pack, secretly places them on the top of the aces. He then deals out the four top cards which the audience believe to be the four aces. On No. 4 card he places the next three cards, which, unknown to the audience, are the four aces. Three cards are dealt on each of the three remaining cards.

Looking at the packets of four cards from left to right, the conjurer knows that he has to force his assistant to choose No. 4 packet, on the right. He begins by asking the assistant to choose two of the packets, and then proceeds to influence his choice (without it being known) by means of "heads I win, tails you lose" principle. If the person chooses the first two packets the conjurer immediately takes them away, leaving No. 3 and No. 4 on the table. If, on the other hand, the assistant chooses No. 3 and No. 4, the conjurer says : "Very well, we will use one of those. Please choose another." If the choice falls on No. 4, the conjurer makes a great hit by pointing out that the packet which the person has freely chosen himself shall be used in the trick. If the person chooses No. 3, the conjurer takes it away and says : "That leaves us with

one packet left. You could have had this one taken away if you had liked, couldn't you?" The way in which No. 4 packet containing the four aces is forced on the person who thinks all the time he has a free choice in the matter will now be quite clear. The audience never know, until the choice is actually made, whether the conjurer is going to take the chosen packet away from the table or leave it there. The rest of the trick explains itself.

**A Matter of "Sympathy."**—To perform this trick, a pack of thirty-two cards is used. On the top are four queens in the following order: heart, spade, diamond, club; the queen of clubs on top. Bring, by means of the "pass", the queen of clubs to the middle of the pack, and force it on somebody. Now place the pack on the table, divide it into two heaps and place the top half, on which the three queens are, at the right side of the bottom half. Ask another spectator to choose one of the two heaps. In case the heap is chosen on which are the three queens, the performer picks it up, places it in his left hand and palms with the right the three queens, and gives heap to spectator to hold. The performer picks up other heap and puts the palmed cards on the top of it and places the heap

in the left hand. Now he asks the person who keeps the other half to take at random three cards from it one by one without looking at them. The performer places them on the heap he has himself, and as soon as all three are placed on top he passes them to the bottom. The three queens will thus remain on the top. Place carefully on a tray or plate the three top cards and hand them to a third person with request to place his other hand on the three cards. (It will be understood that it would facilitate matters in case the first spectator had chosen the bottom on the left-hand heap.)

The performer now makes the following remarks: "Ladies and gentlemen, when doing magical experiments, I occasionally remark that some of them depend entirely on the sympathy existing between the ladies and gentlemen of the company. The same can be said of cards, and in some cases the success depends on this, which I will try to prove by a little experiment."

The three cards chosen "sympathize" not only among themselves, but also with the three cards selected by the first gentleman, so that when, for instance, the first person has selected a knave, ace, seven or ten, the cards selected by the second person ought to be the same. Addressing the first person, the performer requests him to be so kind as to tell which card he selected. Queen of clubs will, of course, be the answer.

Request the person who has his hand lying on the three cards to tell you what they are. They will prove to be queens also.

Show the four queens, and place them under the other half of the pack, after which the remaining heap must be placed again at the top. Now take secretly from the "profonde" four cards, which are prepared in such a way that on one side they show the four queens and the other side they show four spot cards. Place them secretly under the real four queens, picture side downwards. Seem to change your mind, and place the four bottom cards in a row on the table, with the queen side exposed. Request somebody to choose any one of the four queens, not to touch it, but by calling it out. By the way, the four queens at the bottom of the pack must lie in the same order as the four prepared queens lying on the table. Suppose the queen of hearts is chosen. The performer at once passes to the top of the pack the four bottom cards, and quickly slips the queen of hearts to the bottom of the three other queens lying at the top of pack. After this is done, place on each queen lying on the table three ordinary cards, taken one by one from the bottom of the pack. Place them face downwards and be careful that they cover the queens entirely. There are now lying on the table four heaps, each of four cards. Pick up the heap in



which is the chosen queen of hearts, change this heap quietly with the four queens lying on top of pack, and, advancing to the person who selected the queen of hearts, give to him the four queens to hold. To the spectators, it will appear that they are the four cards taken from the table, namely the queen of hearts, with three other cards on top. Be careful that only the backs of the cards are visible. Now touch with your wand three heaps on the table, and also the heap kept by the spectator. Pick up separately each heap from the table, turn them around, spread them out and show that the queens have departed. Request spectator to show his cards, and the audience will see the four queens.

**It Ends in Smoke.**—A card is selected from the pack, torn in pieces, one piece given back for the purpose of identifying the card later. A piece of paper is shown to the audience and the paper is folded into a square to resemble an envelope. The pieces of card are dropped into the paper, and all sides folded down, the paper being given to one of the company to hold. The pistol is fired, the paper torn open, and the card is found restored, except the small piece which was given back to the company. The card and the small

piece are placed in a card-box. You tell the audience that you are going to restore the card to its original condition. As it will take a few seconds to go through the process, if the company do not mind, you will "enjoy a smoke" while waiting. Borrow a cigarette, attempt to light it, say it is strange it will not light; then tear it open, and instead of tobacco, the chosen card is inside; the box being opened is found empty.

The card is forced; the supposed piece of paper is really two pieces pasted together, with a duplicate of chosen card, corner torn off, in centre. The envelope being formed round the card, when torn open it is slit along the front edge with a penknife. The cigarette is changed for a faked one, and the card rolled up and enclosed in cigarette paper. The card-box is normal.

**Find The "Lady".—Effect.**—The queen and two other cards are placed in a row on the table, and the performer, moving them about as though he would confuse his audience, asks someone to "find the lady". The person choosing is told at once that he is wrong. The conjurer picks up one of the other cards and slipping it under the chosen card, turns it over and shows that it is not the queen. He then turns

over the other card in the same way, and finally throws the card he is holding on the table.

*Explanation.*—Let us suppose that the person who is asked to “find the lady” points to the card which the conjurer knows is the queen. He picks up one of the other cards, face downwards, and slips it under the queen and a little in advance of it so that the top of the card in his hand is about half an inch beyond the top of the queen on the table. The card in the hand is held at the tips of the first finger and thumb. When this card is well underneath the queen, the conjurer moves his thumb to the corner of the queen card, and thus holds that card face downwards while he turns over the other card with the tip of his first finger. The effect to the audience is that the conjurer merely turned over one card with another.

The reason for turning over the other card on the table is this: after the conjurer has turned over the first card, he is holding the queen in his hand. By turning over the second card and using this queen, he is able to show that it was the second card that was the queen. If he merely showed that the card in his hand was the queen the audience might suspect some kind of change, although if the trick is done neatly and quickly it is quite impossible for anyone to detect it.

**Lost and Found.**—*Effect.*—A card having been chosen and returned to the pack, the conjurer shuffles the cards, removes three, and places them on the table. He announces that the chosen card is one of the three and says that by means of his own will power he will cause the person who drew the card to touch the actual card that he chose. The person is invited to touch one of the three cards. He does so. The card is turned over and is not the chosen card. The conjurer then pretends that he has made a mistake and asks the person to look at the other two cards on the table. Neither of them is the chosen card. "Some mistake," says the conjurer, looking through the pack. "By the way, which card did you take? The six of clubs (or whatever card is named). I'm sorry, but I think you have made a mistake; there is no such card here." He then runs through the pack and shows that the six of clubs is undoubtedly missing. A search is made for the card and eventually the person who chose it is asked to get up, when the audience see that he has been sitting on the card all the time.

*Explanation.*—After the card is returned and brought to the top of the pack the conjurer takes any three cards and places them on the table well away from the person assisting him so that when the person is asked to touch one of the cards he has to rise from

his chair to do so. The conjurer stands close to him while he gets up and holds the pack in his right hand. When the person is well away from his chair and while all eyes are on the cards on the table the conjurer quietly pushes off the top card with his right thumb, so that when the person sits down again he covers the card.

**It Comes to Pass.**—A large frame is standing on the table. At the base of the frame is a receptacle for holding a pack of cards, and at the top of the frame is a tiny ornamental arch. Having had a card chosen by the audience and returned to the pack, the conjurer hands the pack to another member of the audience with a request that he will shuffle it thoroughly. The conjurer then places the pack in the receptacle and asks what card was chosen. Suppose it was the two of hearts. Commanding the card to show itself, the conjurer makes some passes towards the frame, and the card rises slowly to the top of the ornamental arch above the frame.

*Explanation.*—The card is forced. The houlette or receptacle is provided with an extra space at the back, and in this is placed a card similar to the one which is to be forced. This card has a thread attached to it.

The thread is drawn up to the arch, passed through a little hole there, and then brought down and fastened to a little weight concealed in one of the sides of the frame. This weight rests on the top of some sand in the sides of the frame. When the conjurer wishes the card to rise he releases a little catch at the bottom of the side of the frame and the sand runs into the bottom of the frame. This action causes the little weight to drop down into the side of the frame, and in doing this it naturally draws down the thread and so causes the card to rise. The conjurer stands away from the apparatus while the card is rising, to prove that he is "not operating the trick in any way".

**The Mystic Card-Box.**—The performer hands out a small flat box for inspection. Someone in the audience is invited to take any card from a pack and place it in the box. The conjurer, holding the box to his forehead, immediately names the card in the box.

Here is the explanation. One of the screws at the back of the box is a dummy. In holding up the box the conjurer pulls out this dummy nail a little way. This enables the conjurer to slide the front panel a little to one side with his thumb. At the lower right-hand

corner there is a small hole in the panel, and through this the conjurer is able to read the index corner of the card. The frame can be immediately restored to its original condition and handed out for inspection.

**Watch and See.**—Someone in the audience is invited to shuffle the pack, take a card, replace it in the pack, and shuffle the pack again. The conjurer wraps the pack in a handkerchief and places it on the table. He then takes out his watch and asks someone to tell him the time; he shows that person that his watch is in good going order and is very nearly “on time”. The watch is placed on the covered pack of cards.

The conjurer tells his audience that the watch will help him in the trick by telling him what card was taken.

He immediately names the card and then shows the audience how he gained the information from the watch. The watch is of an unusual kind; the usual figures from the face have vanished and their places have been taken by some miniature cards. The hand of the watch is pointing to a card similar to that which was chosen.

The climax of the trick is reached when the con-

jurer uncovers the pack, and, riffing it, shows that the chosen card has disappeared from the pack.

After a member of the audience has shuffled the pack the conjurer forces a card; this card is slightly shorter than the remaining cards in the pack. After the card is returned to the pack, anyone may shuffle the cards.

The object of the conjurer in asking the time is merely to give him a chance of showing his watch in a natural way. If he took the watch from his pocket and called attention to the fact that he was going to use the watch in the trick, somebody would probably want to look too closely at it. The watch is actually only a dummy with small cards and a hand on the face. Over the face of the watch there is a false dial, similar to that of an ordinary watch. After the conjurer has called attention to the watch, he places it on the covered pack of cards and in doing so palms off the false dial which is attached to the body of the watch by means of a small bayonet catch. A slight turn releases the dial and the watch is placed on the packet.

As the forced card was slightly shorter than the rest of the cards there is no difficulty in causing it to vanish when the cards are riffled, for its face cannot be seen when the cards are "sprung" by the riffle.



**In His Pocket.**—Having invited someone to shuffle the pack the conjurer deals off three cards, asks the person assisting to think of one of them and not to give him any clue as to the card chosen.

The performer then puts the three cards in his pocket and repeats his request to his assistant to think intently of the chosen card. The conjurer takes two of the cards from his pocket and throws them on the table. He then asks his assistant to name the card of which he is thinking, and immediately takes that card from his pocket, thus showing that he had “read” the person’s thoughts.

The explanation is as follows. The conjurer prepared for the trick by slipping two cards into his pocket ; these cards can be hidden by means of the old trick of pushing them to the top of the pocket. No two pockets are quite alike and it may be necessary to bend the cards in order to fix them in their right position. When he deals the cards on the table the conjurer memorizes them, or, alternatively, he can see that the cards are arranged in numerical order ; he need not trouble to remember the suits.

With the order of the three cards clearly fixed in his mind, the conjurer puts them in his pocket, and after some little pretence at thought-reading takes from his pocket the two cards which he hid in his pocket

before the beginning of the trick. It is not advisable to show the faces of these cards, because it is just possible that the assistant may have remembered all three cards which were shown to him, and in that case he would at once notice that the conjurer was using two extra cards.

Having thrown the two cards on the table the conjurer asks his assistant to name the card of which he has been thinking.

The conjurer, remembering the order of the three cards in his pocket, has no difficulty in drawing the particular card required from his pocket.

**A Black Affair.**—The performer introduces an ordinary pack of playing cards and a glass tumbler; they may be examined if necessary. He then borrows a number of coins (say, three). The tumbler is placed on the table, cards on top of it, and, at the command of the conjurer, the coins leave his hand, and are distinctly seen and heard to fall into the tumbler.

A fake, made as follows, is needed. Cut an ordinary playing card in two. Take one half and paint black both sides. Glue a piece of black linen on one side at about half an inch from the end (oblong). Attach

fake to long thread with loop at end and fasten to vest button, put wand under left arm, take coins in left hand, stand away the length of the thread, make pass from left to right, take wand in right hand. Give thread a downward blow with wand, when the fake flies out and coins fall into the glass. Now break thread off vest button, and let it fall on carpet.

Anyone can then take up coins, cards and glass for examination. When performing this trick, stand well behind the table.

**Vanishing Cards Reappear.**—*Effect.*—One card is picked up by the magician, who makes it disappear. He picks up another card with his left hand, places it in the right hand and makes that one disappear. He continues in the same way with five cards. Then, raising his right hand in the air, with a quick movement, he brings the cards back one at a time.

*Explanation.*—The effect is produced by what is known as the “back and front palm”. The first card is held in the centre of one end between the second finger and thumb of the right hand. The conjurer waves his hand up and down, and that movement covers the movements of the fingers which are necessary to get the card to the back of the hand, where it is concealed.

These are the movements of the fingers : the card is held between the tips of the second finger and thumb. Now the little finger and first finger come up at the sides of the card. The second finger is bent towards the palm, and the thumb is released while the card is gripped between the first and second fingers and little and third fingers. To make the card disappear all that is now necessary is to straighten the hand.

To "back palm" the other cards, each is brought up by the left hand to the right, and dealt with in the same manner, each card sliding on to those at the back of the hand.

To cause the reappearance of the cards one at a time, the conjurer proceeds in the following manner : turning his hand round from the wrist and in such a way that the cards cannot be seen by the audience (the exact angle at which the hand should be held can be determined by doing the trick before a looking-glass), the conjurer bends his fingers and then slides the top card of the packet upwards with his thumb ; the little finger releases it, but grips the remaining cards.

The conjurer then extends his first finger and slides it under the card and straightens his hand. This brings one card to view, and keeps the remainder at the back of the hand. The process is repeated to cause the reappearance of the other cards.

If the conjurer pleases he can show that the cards have completely disappeared even when they are held by his right hand ; that is to say, he shows both the back and the front of his hand. Suppose that the cards have been brought to the back in the way described. The conjurer bends his fingers, extends the second finger and with it pushes the cards from the top into the hand. The cards are not palmed in the usual way but are held by the edges between the first and second fingers and third and little fingers. They are then in readiness to be back palmed again.

One card is manipulated very easily in this way. Instead of using the second finger to push the card down into the hand, the magician drags the card down quickly by using his thumb. Simultaneously the hand is turned over, and the audience can see that there is no card at the back of the hand.



**Smaller and Smaller.**—The trick of making cards appear to diminish requires considerable skill. Here are the description and explanation.

The packs of cards you deal with are tied up with a thread. At the back of each pack there is a spring slip, into which the packet of the next size smaller is inserted. Having got the packs palmed in his left hand

the conjurer volunteers to show the audience how it is all done.

He picks up a few cards, places his two hands together and exhibits the largest of the small packs and at the same time palms the big cards which he had picked up. With the excuse of showing how the cards have shrunk, the conjurer now picks up some more big cards with his right hand, and in returning them to the table returns the palmed cards with them. The audience now see the face of the top lot of cards reduced to the size of Patience cards. The conjurer now pretends to make these smaller, but he really pushes them down a little lower in his hands. Picking up a card from the table to show how small the cards are getting, he continues the process, and puts the card down again. This card has a flap at the back. When the card is on the table it is flat, but when it is held with its face towards the audience the flap opens, leaving a little pocket, in which the first packet of small diminishing cards is dropped. The front card of the next size is a flap card, which can be opened to the size of a Patience card. The process is repeated; each time the conjurer picks up a card to show how small the cards are getting. By means of the flap cards all palming of small packets is done away with.

**A Corner Clue.**—The conjurer has a card selected and returned to the pack and the pack shuffled. The cards are strewn about the table. The conjurer picks up the cards one at a time, turns each one over, looks at it, looks at the spectator who drew the card as though he would read his thoughts and then puts the card into his left hand.

He continues to do this until he has a number of cards in his hand, each one of which the spectator has seen. Among them is the card that the spectator originally drew and returned to the pack. Therefore, when the conjurer says: "The next card I turn over will be yours," the spectator, having seen that the card he chose has already been picked up and put in the conjurer's hand, will certainly say: "You're wrong." "Impossible," says the conjurer, "the next card I turn over will be yours." "But you've passed it," says the victim. "You're wrong," says the conjurer, and then takes a card from those in his hand—not one on the table, as the spectator thought—turns it over, and it is, of course, the selected card.

This is the way it is done. When the card is returned to the pack the conjurer holds his fingers under the pack and quietly bends a corner of the card. He is thus able to tell from feeling the card when he picks up the chosen one, and in putting it into his left hand

he keeps his little finger on top of it. He takes care, of course, that the spectator gets a good view of this card, and then goes on picking up cards and looking at each one before he brings the trick to its conclusion.

**The Mysterious Couple.**—Two cards are freely chosen and returned to the pack. The conjurer shuffles the pack, and, holding it in the left hand with only the bottom card visible, asks the first chooser if that was the card. The reply is negative. The conjurer deals this bottom card on the table, and, going to the second chooser, asks if the bottom card is his card. Again the reply is "No". From this point the patter is :

"My trick is fairly simple. I will first ask what were the chosen cards—the king of hearts and the three of diamonds. (They may, of course, be any other cards.) Very well. I think you all saw me place the two bottom cards of the pack—the five of diamonds and the ten of clubs (if those were the cards used)—on the table. What I propose to do is to ask the cards on the table to change places with those cards which were chosen. When you heard that little click (made by the riffle) the change took place, and if you now look at the cards you will see that the five of diamonds and the ten



of clubs which I dealt on the table have returned to the pack and that the chosen cards—the king of hearts and three of diamonds—are on the table. There they are.”

This little piece of magic is brought about by means of half a card, or rather the halves of two cards, pasted together back to back. The conjurer hides this fake under the other cards when he has the two cards chosen. He brings the two chosen cards to the bottom of the pack, and keeps the faked card over one end. In holding up the pack for the first man to see, he keeps his hand in such a position that only the half-card is seen, and the junction between that and the real bottom card is hidden by the hand. When he turns the pack face downwards, and apparently draws out the card which has been shown to the member of the audience, the conjurer keeps hold of the faked card and draws out the bottom card, which is one of the two chosen cards.

The conjurer then turns the faked card over and repeats the process, and gets rid of the faked card in any way he pleases. The only part of the trick in which special care should be taken is in not allowing the two choosers of cards to take cards similar to those on the two sides of the faked card. It is, however, a comparatively simple matter to have these two cards and

the faked half-card at the bottom of the pack before the commencement of the trick, and then there is no chance of a mishap.

**Blindfolded Heaps.**—*Effect.*—The conjurer comes forward with three handkerchiefs, which he says he is going to use for the purpose of “blindfolding the cards”. He has the pack divided in halves. The person doing this is then invited to divide either half into three small heaps, and to wrap each heap in a handkerchief so that the cards may be blindfolded. The person is then asked to choose one of the heaps. The conjurer takes this heap and holds it close to his forehead. He then calls out the names of several cards, and when the handkerchief is taken away the audience see that the cards named by the conjurer were those in the handkerchief.

*Explanation.*—A pre-arranged pack is used. When the person who has been helping the conjurer indicates which heap is to be used in the trick the conjurer says, “Very well, we shall not want these,” and puts the other heaps on one side, but in doing this he secretly stretches the handkerchief, which should be a fine one, over the bottom card of the heap above the one chosen and sees the card through the handkerchief. He then

takes up the chosen heap and holds it to his forehead. In doing this he stretches the handkerchief, sees the bottom card and, therefore, knowing the order of the cards, he can name those in the handkerchief, because knowing the bottom card of the next heap he is able to tell the top card of those he is holding.

**Fanning the Cards.**—*Effect.*—A spectator is asked to assist by freely choosing a card and writing upon it his initials. The card is placed in an envelope, which is closed and given to another member of the audience. The first assistant is now requested to shuffle the pack and fan it. The performer draws a card from fan, calls its name, and, initialling it, puts it in his pocket. These two cards change places and can be immediately shown and initials verified.

*Method.*—The only preparation necessary is to reverse the two bottom cards of the pack and initial the last one. The pack is false-shuffled, care being taken to keep reversed cards out of sight. The spectator freely chooses a card, and the performer, by fanning pack from top to centre, will prevent the bottom cards being observed. The chosen card is initialled, returned to top of pack, and is reversed before placing on the

table. The performer lifts off top card, which is now really bottom card with his own initials, and lays it face down on table. He now lifts up pack and envelope and gives the latter for examination, meanwhile palming the original top card to trousers pocket. The card on the table is placed in an envelope. The remaining reversed card is now altered to agree with rest of pack, which is given to a spectator, who is asked to shuffle and fan. The performer picks a card, does not show it, but calls the name of the card he prepared beforehand. A pretence is made of initialling it. Finally it is placed on "top" of trousers pocket. Cards may now be commanded to change places, and the pocket, by aid of "top" principle, may be shown empty after spectator's card is removed.

(This trick was devised by Margaret Mackey.)

**A Novel Pocket Trick.**—*Effect.*—Three cards are selected and returned to the pack, which is then shuffled and placed in the outside breast pocket of the conjurer's coat. The conjurer asks the choosers of the three cards to name them and he calls upon the cards to come out of his pocket; they obey and rise, one at a time, from the pocket.

*Explanation.*—The three cards are forced, therefore, after they are returned to the pack, anyone is at liberty to shuffle the pack. Inside the pocket there is a little “buckram” partition with three duplicate cards threaded in the usual way. The end of the thread is passed out through the back of the coat and is attached to a spring ratchet winder in the lining of the coat. To cause the cards to rise the conjurer stands, in a natural position, with his left hand on hip and presses on a little knob on the winder; this releases the spring and winds up the thread, causing the first card to rise. The movement is repeated for the other two cards. This trick and the following one are the work of Elbert M. Morey. g

**Suspended in the Air.**—*Effect.*—Three cards are chosen, and returned to the pack. The conjurer, standing in front of a small black velvet screen, throws the pack up in the air. The three chosen cards remain suspended in the air, and the conjurer takes them and hands them out for inspection.

*Explanation.*—The screen is fitted with three short rods with a card concealed by means of black velvet at the end of each rod. The three cards, duplicates of the three which are forced on three members of the audience,

are enclosed in little black velvet bags. These three rods work on three weak spring hinges, and when the cards are to be made to appear a pull at the back of the screen raises the three rods and thus brings the cards into view; as the rods are covered with black velvet the cards appear to be suspended in mid-air.

**Herschell's Envelopes and Cards.**—The following trick was invented by the late Dr. Herschell. Two cards, both of which may be examined before and after the trick, are placed respectively into two envelopes, each of which is provided with a round hole in the centre. By this provision, when cards are placed in envelopes, their centre pips (both cards being nines) are visible to the last moment. In spite of the apparent fairness of the preliminaries, the two cards manage to change places, the red taking the place of the black and *vice versa*.

Only two cards are used, and neither has any preparation in connection with it. Not so the envelopes. The front of each is made double to conceal a lever, the long arm of which carries a square piece of card on which is painted the pip of a card. One envelope has a club pip concealed, the other a heart.

The short arms projecting beyond corners of the envelope, a very slight pressure serves to bring the respective pips into view through the holes. Little more needs to be explained. The nine of hearts goes into the envelope containing the club lever; the nine of clubs goes into the one containing the heart lever. The envelopes are now placed on top of each other, and the levers moved to bring the faked pips into view. Whilst being shown two tumblers, against which the envelopes are eventually lodged, the audience naturally fail to remember the positions of the respective cards. Each envelope is now shown and careful attention drawn to the respective positions of the cards. In turning the envelopes round so that the holes are away from the audience, the levers are pushed aside, so that the cards a few seconds later appear to have changed their positions.

**The Herschell Card-stabbing Trick.**—A selected card is revealed on the point of a dagger, although the spread pack is covered with a piece of newspaper.

The trick is simple, a faked sheet of newspaper being responsible for practically the whole mystery. A pocket made in a sheet of newspaper conceals a duplicate of the card, which is, of course, forced on a spectator.

Let us imagine that the ace of spades is forced. A duplicate of this is "loaded" into the pocket of the paper, and if the paper is neatly faked there is no chance of its presence being detected. So soon as the card is returned to the pack, it is brought to top and palmed away. Ample opportunity for the necessary manipulation is afforded while a bandage for the eyes is examined.

The piercing of the duplicate with the dagger in these circumstances is not a difficult matter, as the performer knows the exact position of the pocket and stabs accordingly.

**Almost a "Miracle".**—A pack of cards in a case is handed to the audience by the conjurer, who asks someone to take out the cards, shuffle them, and select one card. The remainder of the pack is returned to the case, which is handed back to the conjurer, who slips it into his trousers pocket.

The person holding the card is asked to show it to several other members of the audience, and so that he shall not catch a glimpse of the card the conjurer turns his back on the audience for a moment. While he is in that position, the conjurer takes the case from his pocket, and holding it behind his back, asks the holder of the card to put it back in the pack, close the case,



and put a rubber band round it. The performer turns round and immediately names the chosen card.

This is how it is done! The performer is provided with two packs of cards and two cases just alike. One pack is prepared by having an index corner of each card cut out of it. One case has a little piece cut out of the bottom right-hand corner. The space is equal in size to the index corner of a card. The prepared pack is placed in this case and just before he is going to do the trick the conjurer puts the case in his pocket.

The working of the trick, the invention of Hans Trunk, will now be clear. After the card has been chosen the conjurer puts the prepared case, with the case with the prepared cards in it, into his trousers pocket. He eventually takes out the prepared case and holding it behind him with the cut out corner next to his body, invites the spectator to return his card to the case. Directly the performer brings the case in front of him he is able to see the index corner of the selected card.

**The Three Heaps.**—*Effect.*—The spectator, having cut the pack into three heaps, is asked if he has cut them exactly where he pleases. The answer is, of course, "Yes". The conjurer says, "How curious that you

should have cut them just where I wished—at the—” and names the top card of each heap.

*Explanation.*—The conjurer gets a glimpse of the bottom card and brings this to the top by a shuffle. To do this the conjurer picks up the cards in his right hand and turns them over so that the bottom card is facing him. In drawing off some cards with the left hand at the beginning of the shuffle the conjurer puts his thumb on this card and brings it singly into his left hand. The other cards may be fairly shuffled on the top, and then, when the pack is turned over, the card which was formerly at the bottom is now at the top. The spectator cuts the pack into three heaps. In naming the cards at the top of the three heaps the conjurer first names the card he knows is the top card of the pack, but he takes up the card of the middle heap and says “Right”, as though he had actually drawn the card he named. He names this first card when he takes up the card of the lowest heap, and names this second card when he takes up the top card of the last heap. That card, being the original top card of the pack, is the card he named in the first place. Thus he has named all three cards.



**A Friendly Pair.**—*Effect.*—The conjurer asks a member of the audience to choose a card and replace it in the pack. He then asks another spectator to think of any card in the pack. This being done the conjurer deals the cards from the bottom of the pack until he comes to the card of which the spectator is thinking. The next card he deals is the one which has been taken from and returned to the pack. In some way the two cards have shown themselves “friendly” and have appeared together.

*Explanation.*—There is no pretence about the spectator thinking of a card. The conjurer asks him what card he is going to think of. He has previously had the first card returned to the pack, and by bringing it to the bottom has it in readiness for the completion of the trick. He holds the pack in his left hand with the fingers on the bottom card. By using his third finger he draws this card back and deals out the other cards until he comes to the one which was thought of. The next card he takes out is the card chosen and replaced in the pack because he has had that card drawn back at the bottom of the pack all the time.



**The Flying Card.**—*Effect.*—The conjurer has a card selected and placed back in the pack. He asks the chooser to name any person in the room and says that he will try to make the selected card fly invisibly across the room and into that person's pocket. Having pronounced a "magical password", the conjurer announces that the card has flown from the pack, but when the person chosen to receive it looks into his pocket the card is not there. The conjurer expresses surprise at this and asks the chooser of the card what card it was that he took from the pack. When he is told the name of the card the conjurer says that it is a special favourite of his, and that, therefore, the card never goes to a stranger, but flies into his own pocket. He invites anyone to feel in his inside coat pocket, and when this is done the missing card is found there.

*Explanation.*—The conjurer has to force a card, the duplicate of which is already in his coat pocket. The chosen card is put back into the pack and, if the conjurer wishes to make the trick more effective, he brings it to the top by means of the pass and palms it off. He can either drop it behind a handkerchief on the table or slip it into his trousers pocket. The trick is then done. The surprise of the trick lies in the fact that the conjurer never goes to the pocket from which the card is subsequently taken.

**Invisible Travelling.**—*Effect.*—The conjurer takes a card from the top of the pack and causes it to disappear for a second. He “finds” it again, and places it in the other hand. Then the card travels backwards and forwards from one hand to the other. It can be passed through the knees or through the body.

*Explanation.*—The conjurer has two cards alike on top of the pack. He takes these off and shows them as one card. Back palming these, he reproduces one of the cards and leaves the other at the back of his hand. He takes the visible one with his left hand and back palms it, at the same time causing the one at the back of the right hand to appear in that hand. He continues the movements, back palming with one hand and causing the card in the other hand to appear. Then he holds the hands close to the body and makes the cards apparently travel right through the body. He can do the same thing by bending down and holding his hands close at the sides of the knees (the legs being close together) so that the card appears to travel through the legs. The cards are then put together as one card and replaced on the pack.

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"Into the night go one and all." A book like Mr. Cochran's preserves them from oblivion and shows them as they lived for our pleasure and delight. And behind them we see the smiling figure of the great showman as he marshals the procession and cries, "Walk-up!"

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by HIS WIFE

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## HISTORY]

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*Page Twelve*

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*Page Seventeen*

## General Fiction

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